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WITH

SPECIMENS OF FORMS OF PRAYER

FOR

WORSHIP

AS USED IN THE CONTINENTAL REFORMED, & AMERICAN CHURCHES;

WITH THE

Directory for the Public Worship of God

AGREED UPON BY THE ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES AT WESTMINSTER;

AND

FORMS OF PRAYER

FOR ORDINARY AND COMMUNION SABBATHS, AND FOR OTHER SERVICES OF THE CHURCH.

BY

A MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

"Let all things be done decently and in order."—1 Cor. xiv. 46.

EDINBURGH:
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TO

JOHN SMITH, ESQ., M.D.

AT

WHOSE SUGGESTION THE WORK WAS UNDERTAKEN,

THIS VOLUME

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

READERS of the succeeding pages, not knowing the circumstances of the case, may look upon what follows as wanting in unity of purpose and design.

It may, therefore, be proper to explain that the germ of the first portion of the work appeared in an article contributed, some months since, to a periodical published in this city, which excited considerable interest in the minds of some individuals interested in the subject, and which, in an expanded form, was afterwards republished.

For convenience sake the Westminster Assembly's Directory for the Worship of God, is now added, the Editor being persuaded, that the valuable matter which it contains is too much overlooked, and that there are many lay-members of the Church who are almost in ignorance of the existence of such a Manual.

For the concluding portion of this publication, the Editor is responsible. He has no wish to depreciate the endeavours of other labourers in the same field,—but while conscious of shortcomings in the execution of what is now presented to

the public, at the same time, he is not without hope that some help may thence be derived by Students of Divinity, Probationers, and others; as also that it may not be uninteresting to Members of the Church at large, to have a record and memorial of services as conducted in that branch of Christ's Church to which they belong.

EDINBURGH, *May* 1858.

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PRESBYTERIAN LITURGIES:

WITH

SPECIMENS OF FORMS OF PRAYER.

AN experiment has been lately tried in Edinburgh respecting the method of celebrating public worship, which, if not interfered with by the Church judicatories, as after a considerable period it has not been, may lead to important consequences. Dr Robert Lee, on the re-opening of Old Greyfriars' Church, is said to have deviated to a somewhat startling extent from the accustomed manner amongst us of conducting the public worship of God in the sanctuary. Very plain and ungainly the ancient building of Old Greyfriars was, nor has its exterior been susceptible of any considerable measure of improvement. But on entering, a somewhat novel spectacle is presented. With more or less taste, every window has been filled with stained glass, to an extent, we confess, that suggests the idea almost of a religious toy. There are memorial windows, commemorative of various eminent individuals, most of whom ministered within the building—through which a dim religious light penetrates upon what is considered to be one of the more knowing and philosophical congregations in our city. The galleries have been removed, and the pulpit has vanished—a platform of no great height, running instead along the east end of the church, which platform might bear, with little alteration, no small resemblance to an altar.* The pews are so constructed, that if hassocks be placed in them, there is no hindrance to kneeling; while the elders have places arranged for them in front of the minister,

* Since we wrote we see that this part of the original arrangements, is, we presume for acoustic reasons, about to be in some measure altered. As there are no galleries in the church, we should imagine that a very slight additional elevation will be sufficient.

and the choir have their place assigned behind the congregation, who, we must further mention, are understood to stand while the singing proceeds. Nor is this the whole amount of alteration, if rumour be correct. The worship is conducted according to what is understood by the minister to be the *spirit* of the Directory of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. The clergyman is said to read the prayers out of a book, and the people are alleged to be invited at the close of each branch of the petitions, to give their response, thus audibly expressing their concurrence with what has been uttered; while the service in the forenoon is also alleged to be almost wholly devotional—consisting of prayer, singing, and the reading of two chapters of Scripture, with merely a running commentary, and a few interjected remarks—the sermon, which has hitherto occupied so very prominent a place at each *diet* of Scottish worship, being reserved for the afternoon—an arrangement, we should have said, in the case of any one less able and well furnished with matter, than Dr R. Lee, undoubtedly affording nearly the whole amount of leisure and restricted composition which usually attaches to the enjoyment of a collegiate charge.

It is not our intention to enter at large into the question, whether extempore and unpremeditated prayer be preferable to a liturgical form, but only, from materials before us, to which our space prevents us from doing full justice, to furnish some specimens of forms, other than those contained in the English Book of Common Prayer, adopted by the Continental and American Presbyterian Churches. Regarding the changes made in Old Greyfriars' Church, we are far from expressing any positive condemnation. It would, we fear, be next to impossible to conciliate for such innovations the acquiescence of our country artisans and peasantry; since, be it right or wrong, they have learned to look upon practices of this kind, as being at variance with the simplicity of Presbyterian worship, and as a departure from the rigorous abstinence from what is comely or ornamental in the practice of which they have been nurtured. When we remember that in very many of our country districts, the *reading* of

sermons is disliked, and the minister is constrained to the drudgery of painfully mandating every portion of his discourses, we can hardly expect toleration for the reading of *prayers*, however well-composed, and though pervaded by a spirit of the deepest piety. Be it right or wrong, there are thousands of our communicants who would imagine that, under this, they detected a shred of the Episcopal lawn, or that the expedient was had recourse to, in order to prove a cloak for the laziness of the clergyman.

Yet it is true, that, previous to the Westminster Assembly, there was in Scotland a "Book of Common Order,"—a psalter richer and better than that of Rome; and that there prevailed a nobler and more heart-stirring method of devotion. The old Scottish "Book of Prayer," which we would by no means assert to be a manual fit for present use, had been solemnly recognised as the authorised formulary of the national worship; it had been repeatedly commended to acceptance by the General Assembly; was carefully guarded from corruption, and ordered to be translated into Gaelic. It was continuously issued from the press, in a handsome form, down even to 1635; and we are told that, down to 1620, ministers who declined to adopt the English Book of Prayer followed the method it pointed out in observing the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. The Church of Scotland, it thus appears, while presbyterian in government, was not anteliturgical.

We own that reform in the mode of conducting our services, would not be inexpedient. The "*preachings*"—the "*hearing*" of so and so,—the manner in which the worship of the Almighty, which ought ever to be gravely and decently conducted, is too frequently compressed into a corner, that greater scope may be afforded for a sermon of extreme length, too often places the instruction, nay even the pandering to a false and vicious taste on the part of the hearers,—in the foreground; while in many congregations, from want of proper training and help, the only portion of the service in which the congregation can as yet cordially take part, is miserably ill-conducted. Then again, how frequently do we hear

prayers which much more resemble the address of the minister to the hearers—the laboured repetition of every item of a reputed orthodox creed,—than the humble penitent communing of man with his Maker? To render the prayers offered in churches more generally what they ought to be, some help might advantageously be provided, at least, for many a minister to use in his study; a help at once more definite and fuller, than is afforded in the "Directory," now our only authoritative guide; one of the provisions, however, in which, recommending the reading of two chapters of Scripture at each meeting for public worship, one from the Old and the other from the New Testament, or more of each, if the "coherence of the matter requireth," is with hardly a single exception, systematically neglected. The exhortations of man are thus placed above the reading of the holy Oracles. Churches are too often converted into scenes of rhetorical exhibition on the part of the minister, who has now-a-days little chance of esteem, unless he be an eloquent and fluent declaimer. The vacant parish thus often becomes the locale of a mere preaching match; in which the people sit in judgment, and wherein pictorial delineation and loudness of voice, with a due admixture of animal excitement, are likely to be esteemed far above a more sober, thoughtful, and unpretending style of discourse.

A variety of circumstances lead us to think, that the question regarding the propriety of using, to a certain extent, set forms of prayer in public worship—for the sake not only of avoiding those sins against good taste, and those burlesques of worship with which we are too frequently scandalised, is worthy of being entertained. That the employment of such forms is *unpresbyterian*, is an objection wholly grounded on ignorance; for the reformed churches on the Continent, without an exception, have their liturgies, or set forms of prayer; and Knox, whom Scottish Presbyterians so deservedly admire, himself compiled a "Book of Common Order," republished a good many years since by Dr Cumming of London, but which we venture to say, is for the most part wholly unfit for use in our times. The objection of *formality*

is equally unfounded. The publicly offered prayers of every minister, unless he adhere to an almost stereotyped arrangement of thoughts and phrases, must be a form to his congregation. If they are varied, this part of the service frequently becomes an exercise of intellect on his part, and an effort of fixed attention not very favourable to the calmness of chastened devotion on theirs; while, whatever may be said as to the advantage and superiority of free prayer at less formal meetings or in the family, while the wants of the latter vary, the great topics to be embraced in public sanctuary prayer, are fixed and definite, requiring hardly any addition, excepting on occasion of extraordinary epochs or emergencies.

In thus expressing our opinion, we cannot say that such help as is to be desiderated is to be in the main, or to any large extent derived from the liturgy of the Church of England, in its present shape, styled though it be by many of her sons as "incomparable," and as "all but inspired." We know, indeed, that the devout Hooker exclaimed on his death-bed, "Give me the prayers of my mother the Church,—there are none like her's;" we admit the beauty of many of the incidental parts, but we object to the "vain repetitions" in other portions, caused by the conjoining into the morning service of devotions which were intended to be kept apart—to the superstitious rites that it seems occasionally to countenance, and to the blemishes attaching alike to its baptismal and burial services, —to the exceeding brevity of not a few of the prayers, still shorter as contrasted with the length of the opening prefaces, —and to the reading over of the psalms without discrimination, by minister and people alternately. We object to the manner in which the Scripture Lessons have been selected: we can see no reason for the change of dress, or for the "bowing at the name of Jesus," except on the score of the antiquity of the practice; to the turning to the east, which in many quarters assures us that we shall encounter a poor mimicry of medieval devotion. We object to kneel before a communion table, especially if called an altar, knowing that this is contrary to the most ancient practice, and is at variance with the spirit of the institution; as decidedly as we

protest against the practice of the Geneva Church, in this respect, with her people marching round to partake of the elements of bread and wine; but we admire the pathetic and striking litany of the Church of England and not a few of her prayers. We think that a definite service for the administration of the Sacraments, alike of Baptism and of the Lord's Supper, is desirable in our Church. Let us have a fixed form of invitation and caution, before our hearers are invited to take part in the latter solemn rite, together with forms for baptism, marriage, and burial. It is right so far, that the accents of lowly contrite and believing prayer, should be poured forth in the house of mourning; but why, when circumstances permit, should not this service—and we would think it would be better to have that of marriage also—be performed in the church, or by the grave,* that thus, in the latter instance from extreme aversion to practices that have been abused, we shall no longer heap the mould and turf above the inanimate form, as if the task should be got over as speedily as possible, and the poor remains of mortality having been summarily disposed of, the mourners panted again to return to their every day occupation.

While making the above remarks, we are quite willing to admit that the matter resolves itself, in Scotland, into a question of expediency,—Scripture pronouncing no clear opinion in favour of devotional forms. Nor can we shut our eyes to the fact that without ability to conduct the prayer of a congregation, no minister is fitted for the work of preaching, and that if we consult the early writers, *e.g.* if we look into Justin Martyr's description of the worship of the second century, we find him saying that "the president or officiating minister offers up prayer and thanksgiving—ὁσῃ δυναμις αυτῳ —according to his ability," which does not seem to imply that his prayer consisted in the repetition of a customary form, no mental exertion in that case being required: while of a similar nature is Tertullian's observation, "*Sine monitore, quia de pectore oramus.*"

* No very long time has elapsed since a minister, in the city of Perth, was called to an explanation by the presbytery of which he was a member, on account of his having offered up prayer by the grave of a parishioner!

On this subject, and as stating in an interesting manner both sides of the question, we may quote what follows from the appendix to the work of Mr Baird, edited by Mr Binney of London.* The appendix is in the form of a dialogue between several interlocutors, the question under discussion being "shall dissenters have a liturgy?" The first is rather a lengthened passage, but is full of matter for reflection :—

"Half-truths are often as dangerous as whole errors. You can conclude nothing from Paul's conduct in a Jewish synagogue, as to what he sanctioned in the Christian assemblies of the Church. Even in the synagogue, however, (as in Antioch in Pisidia,) he first joined in the order of service, which I suppose would be in great part liturgical. The worship ended, he addressed the assembly; and of course had to argue, and demonstrate, and appeal to the understanding, because he was the advocate and apostle of the new faith. Preaching, and such preaching, was absolutely necessary to the introduction and establishment of the new interpretation of the Prophets, and the new form of truth which he was commissioned to make known. In such circumstances, too, the conduct of the Bereans was appropriate and praiseworthy; it was fitting in men who heard something for the first time, and heard it with wonder and doubt. When, however, *Christian believers* came together,—when they met *as such*, and for *worship*,—it is not to be supposed that Paul's preaching would be like that in the synagogue, or that the much-lauded Berean spirit would be proper then. Christians met with mutual and entire faith in the common salvation, to hear something for edification and comfort, and to join in exercises which would afford utterance to their new life. You can gather very little from the New Testament as to the way in which the worship of the Christian Church was conducted. In some places there was evidently a good deal of disorder, which I suppose you would not imitate. Not seldom, perhaps, a church was mainly 'taught' and 'admonished' by 'psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,' which you *might* imitate, but won't. In quiet and well ordered assemblies, even in the Apostolic age, I am not sure that worship might not soon take a well-understood form;—nature and necessity would not only favour this, but old associations, the precedents alike of temple and synagogue, would contribute to it. There was always, I believe, on the first day of the week, 'the breaking of bread;' this, I can imagine, was the great object for which the Church met, its high service—and the address or exhortation of the bishop or presbyter would be a very simple and spiritual affair. Paul, on one such occasion, preaching till midnight, is not a precedent having in it the nature of fixed law; neither is his ex-

* A chapter on Liturgies By the Rev. C. W. Baird, New York. With a Preface and an Appendix touching the question "Are Dissenters to have a Liturgy?" by the Rev. Thomas Binney. London: Knight & Son, Clerkenwell Close.

ample this, when, a few days afterwards, he kneeled down on the sea shore and prayed with his friends. You can no more establish from the one fact the sinfulness of reading a sermon, or of ending a Sunday evening service before twelve o'clock, than you can draw from the other an inference against forms of prayer. I believe in free prayer, and free preaching too, as much as you do; and in circumstances similar to Paul's Christians, the world over and throughout all time, will be ready, I doubt not, to preach and pray as he did; but it does not follow, that in no *other* circumstances, and at *no* time, can any different mode of either praying or preaching be allowed;—neither does it follow that there was nothing else any where, in the Apostolic age, among all the assemblies of the saints. I have sometimes thought that that glorious choral hymn in the fifth chapter of Revelation, though represented as sung in heaven, might be but the reverberation, so to speak, of what was habitually heard in the Church on earth. That early statement, too, of Christian customs, which we have in Pliny's letter to Trajan, is very remarkable. Lardner refers the letter to the year 108, and translates the words I particularly refer to—'they (the Christians) affirmed . . . . . that they were wont to meet together . . . and sing among themselves ALTERNATELY a hymn to Christ.' The service alluded to was no doubt the Eucharist, the primitive breaking of bread; and the word '*invicem*' cannot mean less, I suppose, than something *antiphonal* in the mode of conducting some part of the service. This, however, would imply the use of a fixed form, as, without this, such alternate singing would be impracticable. I am well aware that you may say, in reply, that this proves nothing as to forms of *prayer;* and you may refer to the worship of the second century, and to Justin Martyr, who says that the bishop offered prayers and thanksgivings before the Eucharist, 'in the best way he could.' I am not careful to go into these matters. I have no question with you as to there being free prayer in the primitive church, and that there should everywhere be free prayer still; all I assert is, that I believe there was a tendency from the very first to some fixed form of service. I think that prayer would come to be affected by this, and might be so without sin. An Apostolic Liturgy, the basis of all others, as some fondly dream, is, as I think, altogether out of the question; but I can admit the probability of a great many early unwritten Liturgies, different churches falling into regular forms of service, which the people could go through without book, especially when such books were perilous possessions; and though when Liturgies were reduced to writing they became more and more monstrous and unnatural, as may be seen by anybody in Neale's History of the Eastern Church, and similar works, yet I am not sure that we do not lose something by repudiating liturgical services altogether. To return, however, to the Apostolic age. I was saying that the brethren met together to break bread, and that then, I thought, the address of the bishop would be a very simple and spiritual exhortation. At other

times, there was the preaching of the gospel, properly so called, to the unconverted; and in certain circumstances, in the Church itself, there was bold, argumentative defence of the truth, and exposition of it, for the instruction of the faithful and their protection against error. But these things are different from Christian worship as such, and as it would be conducted by a number of simple Christian men met together in unity of spirit and in the bond of peace. I am well aware that we can hardly draw a parallel between our great public mixed congregations, and a select society of primitive believers; but I am strongly inclined to think that on the mornings of the Lord's day we should exclusively regard the Church, spiritual persons, whether communicants or not,—that we should conduct every thing as if none other were present,—give peculiar prominence to worship, to Scripture, prayer, and 'the service of song;' and be content with a short, calm, yet earnest exhortation,—the Christian heart, in the officiating minister, uttering itself, in a few pregnant, heavenly words, directly to the heart, the Christian consciousness, of the assembled Church. On other parts of the day, to meet the state of other classes of persons, I would have worship to be less full, less rich, and less prominent; and I would have some one with gifts specially adapted to the task, to bring the powers and forces of his intellect to the work of *preaching*, in its various forms of declaring the gospel, expounding truth, combating error, reproving sin, handling even politics, literature, science, speaking to the age in its own language and on its own topics,—and so flashing the light of the Church on all the outlying and surrounding world.

But all Churches are one sided. We take our models from one aspect of things, or from things fitted for particular epochs. The faith was at first to be propagated by preaching, and grand reformations and changes in the Church have always been effected by the same instrumentality. Apostles and Reformers, in this one aspect of their power, have thus come to furnish to some communities the exclusive type of the ministerial function. The modern minister is to be a preacher; a Luther thundering against abuses, or a Whitefield converting multitudes,—people are to assemble to *hear*,—but the worship of the faithful, who neither need to be converted or reformed, has been lost sight of! Other communities, again, treating the world as if it were the Church, and applying to assemblies of the ignorant and ungodly laws and rules which belong only to spiritual fraternities, make worship everything, in spite of the inherent spiritual incapacity of the multitude for it. In the same way, they make preaching nothing!—They thus delude and betray, where they ought to teach, to enlighten, and to convert; they prostitute, so to speak, all that is sacred in Divine service by making it common—without explanation and without reserve—to worldly crowds! As to your idea of keeping to the 'pattern' of the Apostolic age, you don't do it. You take a part of the pattern, and talk about it as if it were the whole; and you do many things for which you have no pattern at all, or which are palpable modern de-

viations from it. You never can make the system of one individual minister in a church,—he, too, a preacher, and little else,—square with the fact of the plurality of elders in the first churches. So of ordination services, and other things, as too commonly practised amongst us. The communion of saints, the worship of the church, service and sacrament devoted to simple godly edification, are not much to be met with anywhere, especially in the neighbourhood of popular preachers and gazing crowds. The modern preacher is very often too much of a lecturer, and the chapel or church is too much regarded and attended as a lecture-room. Some of our reformers advocate, I believe, the removal of the pulpit,—not to make way for the more emphatic discharge of praise and prayer, (that I could understand,)—but to substitute a platform, and to invite discussion, and thus to turn the meetings of God's priesthood, the Christian people, when they should come together to worship, into something like those of a debating society! All my religious instincts and sensibilities are lacerated and outraged by such an idea! There are times and places, proper enough, for logical disputation, or other forms of mental exercise; but do let us have both the one and the other for meeting as Christians, to feel and act as if the Bible needed no commentary, as if the Gospel had never been doubted, or the institutions of the Church misunderstood. But all reformers depend on intellect,—on argument, agitation, eloquent discourse, and so on,—and they lose sight of the other half of things, the repose of faith and the luxury of devotion. What I want is, to see the church fully up to its *entire* duty,—that it should understand its *whole* character. I wish it, at stated times to give full prominence to what concerns itself—that with which the world can have little sympathy; and at other times 'to hold forth the word of life,' to let preaching have full play; when, if the man have it in him, his sermons may be distinguished by the passion of Peter, the logic of Paul, and the eloquence of Apollos. Now, in strictly and purely *Church* worship, I am not sure that you would not come near to the practices of Apostolic times if you had a regular form of service in which the people should have their allotted part;—if it were only their repetition of the Lord's Prayer, or their uniting in a loud 'Amen.' As to your saying, that by a form of prayer externally brought to you by another, you cannot pray, you condemn yourself,—so far, at least, as to prove that in public you never pray at all, *except when you yourself officiate.* For, if ever a form of prayer, made by another, is externally brought to you for you to pray with, this is most certainly the case when you have to listen to a prayer made at the moment with the idea of your joining in it. To *you* in the pew, the free prayer of the pulpit is a form; and you must excuse my thinking that it comes to you in a way less fitted for your utterance of the 'soul's desire' than if one was used with which you were familiar. The fact really is, that the question about public forms of prayer resolves in itself into this,—not whether a form is to be employed (for *the people* literally can

have nothing else); but whether it is to be one prepared beforehand, or one composed for them at the moment."

The opposite side of the question is argued as follows:—

"He that teaches religion must *have* religion;—that, you know, is the essential condition to a man's being a minister. In the same way, he that has to lead the prayers of others must be filled with the spirit of prayer himself, whether he pray with a Liturgy or without one. I will not deny that I have sometimes enjoyed the Liturgical service of the Church of England; but I have also, I must affirm, been as much disturbed by the way in which that Liturgy has been read, as ever I was with the worst specimens of extemporary prayer. But, besides this, I object to your *theory* of public prayer. It is, I think, imperfect and unspiritual. I don't admit that the only idea of public devotion is that of the people *actually praying*,—offering up, *in words*, as their own, every petition presented to God. There is that *spirit* of prayer of which you speak,—a spirit which is not always *brought* to the house of God even by the best and holiest of men. Public prayer is to *excite* this as well as to express it, or to aid its expression. Now, I do maintain that where the minister is what he ought to be, there is more likelihood of his *exciting* devotion by free prayer than by the use of familiar forms, however unexceptionable and excellent in themselves. I have heard prayers which have gradually kindled, elevated, and enlarged the souls of the wrapt yet subdued people, by their solemnity and richness, in a way which was utterly indescribable, but which no Liturgy that was ever framed could possibly effect! The heart has been touched and softened; all sorts of emotion called forth; the truths of the common faith, implied in every sentence, have been brought before the mind with luminous clearness, and made to act with a penetrating power, penitence, faith, hope, joy, with all other corresponding sentiments, have been evoked and sustained; the invisible has been revealed; the world has disappeared; the presence of 'the Comforter' has seemed a consciously felt reality! Such seasons are 'times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord,' when the assembled Church feels 'the powers of the world to come.' Every man with the slightest spark of Christian life in him feels bettered, enriched, purified, exalted;—he is humbler, stronger;—more loving, more holy, more joyous;—'filled' by a Divine blessedness, 'with' or 'unto,' 'all the fulness of God!' Yet, with all this, few or none might be conscious of *directly offering up prayer*,—offering, I mean, *the words* of any one of the petitions uttered,—or of *literally* uniting in, by actually repeating, what they heard of adoration, contrition, confidence, or joy. *You* would say that they did not pray, or that they did not join in prayer with the minister and with each other,—that they only listened to another praying. *I* say that *their whole spiritual nature prayed;* their souls were a living sacrifice; they themselves were a petition,—presenting and constituting such prayer as you read of when it is said, 'The Spirit maketh intercession in us'

in a manner that 'cannot be uttered.' Depend upon it, 'He that knoweth the mind of the Spirit,' and who can do for us 'above what we can either ask or think,' does not regard as insignificant or worthless such prayers as these,—these which are inward, living thoughts,—thoughts and things which are unuttered because they are unutterable,—'a meditation of the heart,' which 'the words of the lip' cannot express; but things, nevertheless, which have a voice and meaning in them understood by 'Him with whom we have to do,'—who can interpret what He sees within us, translating, as it were, the dumb and the inarticulate into a language far more expressive, copious, and exact than man or angel ever knew,—to whom the 'groanings' of Humanity may not only be as acceptable, but in whose ear they may be as sweet and as harmonious, as the song of sinless intelligence and the symphonies of the upper world!

The first speaker in the imaginary discussion thus expresses himself.

It would ill become any of us to doubt the truth of what you have said, or to question the sincerity with which you have spoken. We could all, I believe, bear witness to such seasons as those you have described:—seasons, however, you will permit me to say, which are not common; which require for their occurrence not only men of a peculiar order of mind, and of deep spiritual experience, but also certain favourable impulses, a felicitous spiritual condition of things at the moment, in the men themselves. You have set before us what is undoubtedly true; but it is something *exceptional*. Few men can realize it; and in those who can, it can only occur occasionally. Now, might not something be said of like sort with respect to the influence of liturgical forms? In the hands of some men,—or, at particular times, in the hands of the same man,—may not a similar effect to what you have described, as to the excitement to devotion, be produced by a Liturgy; while, at other times, and in other hands, it might be as distracting, deadening, and unproductive as the meaner forms of free prayer?"——

Both Luther and Calvin, it is well known, framed for the churches founded by them a form of public service,—Luther's "German Mass" (so he called it), being published in 1526, while previously, in 1523, he published a work entitled "Of the Order of the Service of the Congregation." The instructions for the daily morning service, follow very nearly the supposed manner of worship in the Jewish synagogue, comprehending the reading and expounding of the word, by a scholar or a minister, followed by psalms and responsaria, the whole service being meant not to exceed one hour's duration. In accordance with Luther's views, the Reformed Churches of Northern Europe drew up liturgies for themselves, which have

been, at intervals since, changed and modified as circumstances appeared to render this desirable. Calvin entertained similar opinions, though his liturgical forms afforded no opportunity of response being made by the congregation, the prayers, as is still the case in the Church of Geneva, being read from the pulpit by the minister, probably very much in the form of an aid, while a considerable portion of the service was left to be conducted according to his discretion. The service of Calvin commences with a general confession, nearly the same as that introduced by Knox, the confession being followed by a psalm, after which the "minister is again to engage in prayer, begging God to grant the gift of the Holy Spirit, that His Word may be faithfully explained." The sermon succeeds, and is followed by an exhortation to the people to pray, preceding a somewhat lengthened form. Next comes the Apostles' Creed, the whole being concluded by the Benediction. The Geneva Liturgy as now used, contains a variety of additional forms, besides a distinct service for each day of the week, and for various festivals, such as New Year's Day, the Anniversary of the restoration of the Republic, &c.

A natural and logical sequence seems to pervade the form of public worship which Calvin left behind him. The several acts of devotion follow each other, commencing with those which are more primary and preparative.

In the morning service, the reading of a portion of Scripture, and the enunciation of the Commandments form a preface to the prayers. Only after this has been finished, does the minister enter the desk and begin his proper work by repeating a sentence of invocation, afterwards calling on the people to join him in prayer and then repeating a confession of sins, followed by supplication for grace. This was to be followed by the singing of a psalm on the part of the congregation, the minister anew offering up prayer, and next proceeding with his sermon. The sermon again, was to be followed (and naturally as an act of instruction) by the intercessory prayer, which exceeded in length the other form, the whole being terminated,—unless the Communion was to be administered,—with the Lord's Prayer, the recital of the Apostles' Creed and the Blessing.

We here quote, from the work of Mr Baird, already referred to, the following additional particulars regarding Calvin's Liturgy:—

"Respecting the degree of strictness with which these forms of worship should be observed, Calvin's design evidently was, that no deviation be allowed from those parts which are *prescribed*. 'As to what concerns a form of prayer and ecclesiastical rites,' says he in a letter to the Protector Somerset, 'I highly approve of it that there be a certain form, from which the ministers be not allowed to vary: That first, some provision be made to help the simplicity and unskilfulness of some; secondly, that the consent and harmony of the Churches one with another may appear; and lastly, that the capricious giddiness and levity of such as affect innovations may be prevented. To which end I have showed that a Catechism will be very useful. Therefore there ought to be a stated Catechism, a stated form of prayer, and administration of the sacraments.'

"For voluntary and extemporaneous prayer, Calvin made special provision. The prayer before sermon in the service for the LORD'S Day, is left to the minister's choice; and all other services of public prayer, whether on week-days or on the afternoon of the Sabbath, are unrestricted and free. At such times, the preacher is to use 'such words in prayer as may seem to him good, suiting his prayer to the occasion, and the matter whereof he treats.' Only in those general supplications, which from their nature must be uniform, as they express common wants and desires, the reformer required a close adherence to the public formularies of the Church. This union of free prayer with the rigid use of a Liturgy, was the marked and peculiar excellence of the Geneva worship. . . . The simplicity upon which this ritual was framed, pervaded also the manner of its celebration. The churches of Geneva had been stripped of all their ancient garniture; no symbol of worship remained except the Cross, which for some years was suffered to stand on the towers of the churches. The altar was replaced by a Communion-table; the baptismal fonts were at first removed, though afterwards restored; the prayers were said, and the Bible read from the pulpit.* Instead of variegated vestments, the garb of the ministers was the plain black robe with embroidered lappets, the bands, and the black velvet cap, which were afterwards commonly worn for many years by the Calvinistic clergy of France, Holland, and Scotland.

"The posture of the people during prayer seems, in the early days of the Reformation, to have been that of kneeling. We infer as much from the remark of Calvin quoted on a preceding page, respecting the introduction of a form of absolution. The fact is indicated also by a canon of the Book of Discipline of the French churches, adopted in 1559. . . .

"While thus providing for the office of prayer, our Reformer introduced also the regular practice of congregational singing. To him we are all indebted for this feature of Divine worship, which was directly copied from the Church of Geneva into the Scottish and Anglican services. At his suggestion it was that Clement Marot

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* If the minister is to be understood to lead the prayer of the congregation, why should this be? Would it not be an improvement to adopt an approximation to the practice of the Church of England, should the movement for a reformation of our public worship go on? The preacher stands in the most advantageous place for arguing and remonstrating with his audience. The leader of public prayer acts as one of the congregation; does not require to make use of rhetorical exertion, and is supposed to join in unison with them.

and Theodore Beza translated the Psalms of David into French verse, and set them to simple and appropriate airs. A volume containing some portion of these psalms made its appearance at Geneva, with a preface by Calvin, in 1543; but the collection was not completed before the year 1561.

"In a survey of the Calvinistic worship, this interesting feature of Psalmody must not be omitted. It belongs peculiarly and characteristically to that worship. The Reformers of Switzerland and Scotland did not, as we often hear, deprive their ritual of a responsive and popular character. They did no more than separate the functions of minister and people into the distinct duties of reading and singing. The Psalms are the responsive part of Calvin's Liturgy. These choral services embodied the acts of adoration, praise, and thanksgiving, which are scarcely noticed in the forms of prayer; while in the latter, the offices of intercession, supplication, and teaching were assigned to the minister alone. The prayers by constant use made familiar to the people, were to be followed silently or in subdued tones; the psalms and hymns constituted their audible utterance in the sacred ministrations.

"This portion of Divine service was taken from the Roman Catholic Church, where it had been preserved from the Jewish and early Christian worship. Nor did our Reformers reject those other ancient Hymns which for ages had been closely united with the Psalms in public devotion. The *Te Deum*, the *Song of Simeon*, the *Magnificat*, were likewise transferred in a metrical shape to the Protestant ritual. None of these, perhaps, has been more frequently and heartily used, in the solemnities of the Church and in private acts of praise, than the sublime hymn of Ambrose and Augustine. . . .

"For the frequency of public services of worship, Calvin made abundant provision in the Churches of Geneva. Prayers with sermon were said on every day of the week. On the Sabbath there were three services, one of which was for catechetical instruction. On Monday, Tuesday, and Friday there was a service at the cathedral, to be attended by all the magistrates of the city. On Thursday took place the weekly expository exercise, called the '*Congregation*,' the object of which was 'to uphold the purity of the clergy, whether of the city or of the country. At this meeting, every minister was to discourse in his turn on the portion of Scripture appointed for the day. After the sermon, the ministers were to withdraw and make their remarks especially on the preacher. If any controversy arose on matters of doctrine, they were to employ their best endeavours to preserve union; and if they failed in this, the elders of the church were to give their opinion on the subject, and strive to restore peace.' This expository service was imitated in Scotland, and thence transferred to the Church of England. Magistrates, soldiers, and people were alike required to attend these week-day services. The students of the academy or university founded by Calvin were to be present at Divine worship every Wednesday in the cathedral, as well as three times on the Sabbath. The city garrison, by a later regulation, were directed to attend prayers twice every day. And here let us observe, in passing, one of those beautiful customs that belong peculiarly to the religious times of which we speak. At every gate of the city, a soldier knelt down and repeated aloud a prayer, before the portal was closed at night, and before it was opened in the morning. Truly, with such habits of devotion, and such facilities for the spiritual culture of its people, Geneva deserved the eulogy of Knox, when he called it 'The most perfect school of CHRIST that ever was on earth.' 'God hath made of Geneva,' says an old writer, 'His Bethlehem; that is to say, His *house of bead*.'"

Our readers may be curious to look at this form for themselves :—

"THE FORM OF CHURCH PRAYERS.

"On week days the minister useth such words in prayer as may seem to him good, suiting his prayer to the occasion, and the matter whereof he treats in preaching.

For the Lord's day in the morning is commonly used the Form ensuing. After the reading of the appointed chapters of Holy Scripture, the Ten Commandments are read. Then the minister begins thus :—

INVOCATION

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Amen.

EXHORTATION.

Brethren, let each of you present himself before the LORD, with confession of his sins and offences, following in heart my words.

CONFESSION.

Lord GOD! Eternal and Almighty Father: We acknowledge and confess before thy holy majesty, that we are poor sinners; conceived and born in guilt and in corruption, prone to do evil, unable of ourselves to do any good; who by reason of our depravity, transgress without end thy holy commandments. Therefore we have drawn upon ourselves, by thy just sentence, condemnation and death. But, O LORD! with heartfelt sorrow we repent and deplore our offences! we condemn ourselves and our evil ways, with true penitence beseeching that thy grace may relieve our distress.

Be pleased then to have compassion upon us, O most gracious GOD! Father of all mercies; for the sake of thy Son JESUS CHRIST our Lord. And in removing our guilt and our pollution, grant us the daily increase of the grace of thine Holy Spirit; that acknowledging from our inmost hearts our own unrighteousness, we may be touched with sorrow that shall work true repentance; and that thy Spirit, mortifying all sin within us may produce the fruits of holiness and of righteousness well-pleasing in thy sight: Through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. Amen.

This done, shall be sung in the congregation a Psalm; then the minister shall begin afresh to pray, asking of GOD *the grace of his Holy Spirit, to the end that his word may be faithfully expounded, to the honour of his name, and to the edification of the church; and that it be received in such humility and obedience as are becoming.*

The form thereof is at the discretion of the minister.

[*Prayer which the ministers are accustomed to make.*]

FOR ILLUMINATION.

Most gracious GOD, our heavenly Father! in whom alone dwelleth all fulness of light and wisdom: Illuminate our minds, we beseech thee, by thine Holy Spirit, in the true understanding of thy word. Give us grace that we may receive it with reverence and humility unfeigned. May it lead us to put our whole trust in thee alone; and so to serve and honour thee, that we may glorify thy holy name, and edify our neighbours by a good example. And since it hath pleased thee to number us among thy people; O help us to pay thee the love and homage that we owe, as

children to our Father, and as servants to our Lord. We ask this for the sake of our Master and Saviour, who hath taught us to pray, saying, OUR FATHER, &c.

At the end of the sermon, the minister having made exhortation to prayer, beginneth thus:—

INTERCESSION.

Almighty GOD, our heavenly Father! who hast promised to grant our requests in the name of thy well-beloved SON: Thou hast taught us in his name also to assemble ourselves together, assured that he shall be present in our midst, to intercede for us with thee, and obtain for us all things that we may agree on earth to ask thee. Wherefore, having met in thy presence, dependant on thy promise, we earnestly beseech thee, O gracious GOD and Father! for his sake who is our only Saviour and Mediator, that of thy boundless mercy thou wilt freely pardon our offences; and so lift up our thoughts and draw forth our desires toward thyself, that we may seek thee according to thy holy and reasonable will.

FOR RULERS.

Heavenly Father! who hast bidden us pray for those in authority over us: We entreat thee to bless all princes and governors, thy servants, to whom thou hast committed the administration of justice; and especially * * * May it please thee to grant them the daily increase of thy good Spirit, that with true faith acknowledging JESUS CHRIST, thy Son our Saviour, to be King of kings, and Lord of lords, unto whom thou hast given all power in heaven and on earth; they may seek to serve thee and exalt thy rule in their dominions. May they govern their subjects, the creatures of thy hand and the sheep of thy pasture, in a manner well pleasing in thy sight; so that as well here as throughout all the earth, thy people, being kept in peace and quiet, may serve thee in all godliness and honesty; and we, being delivered from the fear of our enemies, may pass the time of our life in thy praise.

FOR PASTORS.

Almighty Saviour! we pray for all whom thou hast appointed pastors of thy believing people, who are intrusted with the care of souls and the dispensing of thy holy gospel. Guide them by thy Spirit, and make them faithful and loyal ministers of thy glory. May they ever hold this end before them: that by them all poor wandering sheep may be gathered in and made subject to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, and in him daily grow up and increase in all righteousness and truth. Deliver thy churches from the mouth of ravenous wolves and hirelings, who seek only their own ambition or profit, and not the exaltation of thy holy name, and the safety of thy flock.

FOR ALL CONDITIONS OF MEN.

Most gracious GOD, Father of all mercies! We beseech thee for every class and condition of our fellow-men. Thou who wouldst be acknowledged as the Saviour of all mankind, in the redemption made by thy Son JESUS CHRIST: Grant that such as are yet strangers to thy knowledge, in darkness and captivity to ignorance and error, may, by the enlightening of thy Spirit and the preaching to thy word, be led into the right way of salvation; which is to know thee, the only true GOD, and JESUS CHRIST, whom thou hast sent. May those whom thou hast already visited with thy grace, and enlightened with the knowledge of thy word, grow daily in all

godliness, and be enriched with thy spiritual gifts. So that we all with one heart and one voice, may ever praise thee, giving honour and worship to thy CHRIST, our Lord, Lawgiver, and King.

FOR AFFLICTED PERSONS.

GOD of all comfort! We commend to thee those whom thou art pleased to visit and chasten with any cross or tribulation; the nations whom thou dost afflict with pestilence, war, or famine; all persons oppressed with poverty, imprisonment, sickness, banishment, or any other distress of body or sorrow of mind: That it may please thee to show them thy fatherly kindness, chastening them for their profit; to the end that in their hearts they may turn unto thee, and being converted, may receive perfect consolation, and deliverance from all their woes.

FOR PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS.

More especially we commend to thee our poor brethren scattered abroad under the tyranny of Antichrist, who are destitute of the pasture of life, and deprived of the privilege of publicly calling on thy holy name. We pray for those who are confined as prisoners, or otherwise persecuted by the enemies of thy gospel. May it please thee, O Father of mercies! to strengthen them by the virtue of thy Spirit, in such sort that they faint not, but constantly abide in thy holy calling. Succour them, help them as thou knowest they may need; console them in their afflictions; maintain them in thy safe keeping; defend them against the rage of devouring wolves; and augment within them all the graces of thy Spirit, that whether in life or death, they may glorify thy name.

FOR THE CONGREGATION.

Finally, O GOD our Father! Grant also unto us, who are here gathered in the name of thy holy Child JESUS, to hear his word [and to celebrate his holy Supper], that we may rightly and unfeignedly perceive our lost estate by nature, and the condemnation we have deserved and heaped up to ourselves by disobedient lives. So that, conscious that in ourselves there dwelleth no good thing, and that our flesh and blood cannot inherit thy kingdom, with our whole affections we may give ourselves up in firm trust to thy beloved Son, JESUS CHRIST, our Lord, our only Saviour and Redeemer. And that he, dwelling in us, may mortify within us the old Adam, renewing us for that better life, wherein we shall exalt and glorify thy blessed and worthy name, ever, world without end. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name: Thy kingdom come: Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven: Give us this day our daily bread: And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors: And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

THE CREED.

Lord, increase our faith.

I believe in GOD the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in JESUS CHRIST, his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried: He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of GOD the Father Almighty; from whence He

shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the HOLY GHOST; the Holy Catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE BLESSING.

Which is pronounced at the departure of the people, according as our Lord hath commanded in the Law.—Numb. vi. 23.

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee:
The Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:
The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

Whereunto is added, to remind the people of the duty of alms-giving, as it is customary upon leaving the church,

Depart in peace. Remember the poor; and the GOD of peace be with you.—Amen."

We have before us a great variety, more especially of foreign liturgical forms, all more or less based on similar principles; but as we have alluded to the propriety and utility of having services adapted to special occasions, we shall give a specimen of two of these services as contained in the Liturgy of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of America. Our first extract is from the "Form for the Administration of the Lord's Supper." We begin, first of all, with the introductory exhortation, which is an excellent one:—

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, attend to the words of the institution of the holy supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they are delivered by the holy Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xi.: 23 30.

"For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. And after the same manner also, he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me: for as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup: for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation* [judgment] to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

That we may now celebrate the supper of the Lord to our comfort, it is above all things necessary,

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* *Gr.* κριμα—*D.* Oordeel—*E.* Judgment, condemnation.

FIRST, Rightly to examine ourselves.

SECONDLY, To direct the Supper to that end for which Christ hath instituted the same, namely, to the remembrance of him.

(I.) In order to the right examination of ourselves:—

First, Let every one consider by himself his sins and the curse due to him for them, to the end that he may abhor and humble himself before God; considering that the wrath of God against sin is so great, that, rather than it should go unpunished, he hath punished the same in his beloved Son Jesus Christ, with the bitter and shameful death of the cross.

Secondly, Let every one examine his own heart, whether he doth believe this faithful promise of God, that all his sins are forgiven him, only for the sake of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, and that the perfect righteousness of Christ is imputed and freely given to him as his own, yea, so perfectly as if he had, in his own person, satisfied for all his sins, and fulfilled all righteousness.

Thirdly, Let every one examine his own conscience, whether he hath resolved henceforth to show true thankfulness to God in his whole life, and to walk uprightly before him; and also hath an earnest purpose, from this time forth, to live in true love and peace with his neighbour.

All those who are thus minded, God will certainly receive in mercy, and count them worthy partakers at the table of his Son Jesus Christ.

On the contrary, those who do not feel this witness in their hearts, eat and drink judgment to themselves. Therefore, we also, according to the Scriptures, admonish all those who know themselves to be defiled with the following sins, to keep themselves from the table of the Lord; such as all idolators, and all who use or trust in any form of divination; all despisers of God, and of his word, and of the holy sacraments; all profane or false swearers; all Sabbath-breakers; all those who are disobedient to parents or rightful superiors, and all movers of sedition and discord; all murderers, and such as live in hatred or envy against their neighbour; all unclean persons and drunkards; all thieves and extortioners; all slanderers and liars; all covetous and miserly persons; and all who lead offensive lives. These, while they continue in such sins, shall abstain from this meat, lest their condemnation be made the heavier.

But this is not designed, dearly beloved brethren and sisters in the Lord, to deject the contrite hearts of the faithful, as if none might come to this Supper but such as are without sin; for we do not come to the Supper of the Lord, to testify thereby that we are perfect and righteous in ourselves; but, on the contrary, since we are seeking our life out of ourselves in Jesus Christ, we acknowledge by this very service that we lie in the midst of death. Therefore, notwithstanding we still find many shortcomings and miseries in ourselves, as, namely, that we have not perfect faith, and do not give ourselves to serve God with such zeal as we are bound, but have daily to strive with the weakness of our faith and evil lusts of our flesh; yet, since, by the grace of the Holy Ghost, we are sorry for these weaknesses and earnestly desire to fight against our unbelief, and to live according to all the commandments of God, we rest assured that no sin or infirmity which still, against our will, remaineth in us, can hinder us from being received of God in mercy, and so made worthy partakers of this heavenly meat and drink.

(II.) Let us now also consider to what end the Lord hath instituted his Supper, namely, that we "do this in remembrance of him." Now after this manner are we to remember him by it:—

First, We must be fully persuaded in our hearts that our Lord Jesus Christ was sent of the Father into the world: Assumed our flesh and blood: Bore for us the wrath of God from the beginning of his incarnation to the end of his life upon earth; especially when the weight of our sins and of the wrath of God pressed out of him the bloody sweat in the garden, where he was bound—that our bonds might be loosed: Afterwards suffered innumerable revilings—that we might never come to shame: In his innocence was condemned to death—that we might be acquitted at the judgment seat of God; yea, suffered his blessed body to be nailed on the cross—that he might fasten thereon the handwriting of our sins: Took on him the burden of our curse, that he might fill us with his blessings; and humbled himself unto the deepest reproach and pains of hell, in body and in soul, on the tree of the cross, when he cried with a loud voice, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me?"—that we might be made nigh unto God, and never be forsaken of him: And finally, confirmed with his death and the shedding of his blood the new and eternal testament—that covenant of grace and reconciliation—when he said, "It is finished."

Moreover, That we may firmly believe that we belong to this covenant of grace, the Lord Jesus Christ hath ordained this Holy Supper, and said, "This do ye in remembrance of me;" that is, "As often as ye eat of this bread and drink of this cup, you shall thereby, as by a sure memorial and pledge, be persuaded of this my hearty love and faithfulness towards you, that whereas otherwise you should have suffered eternal death, I have given my body to the death of the cross, and have shed my blood for you; and with my crucified body and my shed blood do nourish your hungry and thirsty souls to everlasting life as surely as this bread is broken before your eyes and this cup is given to you, and you eat and drink the same in remembrance of me."

From this institution of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, we see that he directs our faith, and trusts to his perfect sacrifice, once offered on the cross, as the only ground of our salvation, since by that sacrifice he is become to our hungry and thirsty souls, the true meat and drink of life eternal. For by his death he hath taken away the cause of our eternal death and misery, namely, sin, and obtained for us the life-giving Spirit, that by the same, which dwelleth in Christ as the head, and in us as his members, we may have true communion with him, and be made partakers of all his blessings—of life eternal, righteousness, and glory: And furthermore, that, by the same Spirit, we may, as the members of one body, be united in true brotherly love, "For we, being many, are one bread and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread." For, as out of many grains one meal is ground and one bread baked, and out of many berries being pressed together one wine floweth and mixeth itself together, so all we who, by true faith, are incorporated into Christ shall, by brotherly love, be one body for the sake of Christ, our beloved Saviour, who hath first so exceedingly loved us; and this we shall show towards one another, not only in word but also in very deed.

The Prayer.

That we may obtain all this, Let us humble ourselves before God, and with true faith implore his grace.

O most merciful God and father! we beseech thee that in this Supper, in which we celebrate the glorious remembrance of the bitter death of thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, thou wilt so work in our hearts by thy Holy Spirit; That we, with true confidence, may more and more give ourselves up unto thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, so that our burdened and fainting hearts may, through the power of the Holy Ghost,

in a manner that 'cannot be uttered.' Depend upon it, 'He that knoweth the mind of the Spirit,' and who can do for us 'above what we can either ask or think,' does not regard as insignificant or worthless such prayers as these,—these which are inward, living thoughts,—thoughts and things which are unuttered because they are unutterable,—'a meditation of the heart,' which 'the words of the lip' cannot express; but things, nevertheless, which have a voice and meaning in them understood by 'Him with whom we have to do,'—who can interpret what He sees within us, translating, as it were, the dumb and the inarticulate into a language far more expressive, copious, and exact than man or angel ever knew,—to whom the 'groanings' of Humanity may not only be as acceptable, but in whose ear they may be as sweet and as harmonious, as the song of sinless intelligence and the symphonies of the upper world!

The first speaker in the imaginary discussion thus expresses himself.

It would ill become any of us to doubt the truth of what you have said, or to question the sincerity with which you have spoken. We could all, I believe, bear witness to such seasons as those you have described:—seasons, however, you will permit me to say, which are not common; which require for their occurrence not only men of a peculiar order of mind, and of deep spiritual experience, but also certain favourable impulses, a felicitous spiritual condition of things at the moment, in the men themselves. You have set before us what is undoubtedly true; but it is something *exceptional*. Few men can realize it; and in those who can, it can only occur occasionally. Now, might not something be said of like sort with respect to the influence of liturgical forms? In the hands of some men,—or, at particular times, in the hands of the same man,—may not a similar effect to what you have described, as to the excitement to devotion, be produced by a Liturgy; while, at other times, and in other hands, it might be as distracting, deadening, and unproductive as the meaner forms of free prayer?"——

Both Luther and Calvin, it is well known, framed for the churches founded by them a form of public service,—Luther's "German Mass" (so he called it), being published in 1526, while previously, in 1523, he published a work entitled "Of the Order of the Service of the Congregation." The instructions for the daily morning service, follow very nearly the supposed manner of worship in the Jewish synagogue, comprehending the reading and expounding of the word, by a scholar or a minister, followed by psalms and responsaria, the whole service being meant not to exceed one hour's duration. In accordance with Luther's views, the Reformed Churches of Northern Europe drew up liturgies for themselves, which have

been, at intervals since, changed and modified as circumstances appeared to render this desirable. Calvin entertained similar opinions, though his liturgical forms afforded no opportunity of response being made by the congregation, the prayers, as is still the case in the Church of Geneva, being read from the pulpit by the minister, probably very much in the form of an aid, while a considerable portion of the service was left to be conducted according to his discretion. The service of Calvin commences with a general confession, nearly the same as that introduced by Knox, the confession being followed by a psalm, after which the "minister is again to engage in prayer, begging God to grant the gift of the Holy Spirit, that His Word may be faithfully explained." The sermon succeeds, and is followed by an exhortation to the people to pray, preceding a somewhat lengthened form. Next comes the Apostles' Creed, the whole being concluded by the Benediction. The Geneva Liturgy as now used, contains a variety of additional forms, besides a distinct service for each day of the week, and for various festivals, such as New Year's Day, the Anniversary of the restoration of the Republic, &c.

A natural and logical sequence seems to pervade the form of public worship which Calvin left behind him. The several acts of devotion follow each other, commencing with those which are more primary and preparative.

In the morning service, the reading of a portion of Scripture, and the enunciation of the Commandments form a preface to the prayers. Only after this has been finished, does the minister enter the desk and begin his proper work by repeating a sentence of invocation, afterwards calling on the people to join him in prayer and then repeating a confession of sins, followed by supplication for grace. This was to be followed by the singing of a psalm on the part of the congregation, the minister anew offering up prayer, and next proceeding with his sermon. The sermon again, was to be followed (and naturally as an act of instruction) by the intercessory prayer, which exceeded in length the other form, the whole being terminated,—unless the Communion was to be administered,—with the Lord's Prayer, the recital of the Apostles' Creed and the Blessing.

views coming forward on such subjects, and showing their deep interest in the welfare of our national Zion; and we strongly sympathise with the desire expressed by Dr Smith, that some manual, such as he specifies, should be prepared for the use of our emigrant brethren, our colonists who have not the advantage of a stated ministry, and the many of our people at home whom unavoidable circumstances at times preclude from joining in the worship of the sanctuary.

"No one can read the details from the Colonies in our *Missionary Record*, without lamenting the destitute condition of our brethren in respect to the privileges and enjoyment of Gospel ordinances. In many churches in our North American colonies, there have been no services for a series of years, from the want of ministers. In these trying circumstances, the people have earnestly and repeatedly appealed to the General Assembly to supply this want, and have at the same time petitioned to be provided with a Book of Devotion, as a great help in the absence of the public Services of the Church. It is gratifying to know that these appeals are now meeting with attention.

The Liturgy of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church, affords us the following excellent specimen of a burial service:—

The Service at the House.

PREFACES.

(One or more of which may be read at discretion.)

It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men, and the living will lay it to heart.

Let us weep with those that weep; and let our prayer also be in their calamities.

Affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground. See now, saith the Lord, I, even I, am he, and there is no God beside me. I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.

The Lord destroyeth the hope of man. The Lord prevaileth against him and he passeth. He changeth his countenance and sendeth him away.

It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed; because his compassions fail not. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.

Though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies. For he doth not afflict willingly the children of men.

Despise not the chastening of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of

him; for whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

Now, no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby. Wherefore, lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees.

For we have not an High Priest which can not be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us, therefore, come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Leave thy fatherless children, (saith the Lord;) I will preserve them alive; and let thy widows trust in me.

A father of the fatherless and a judge of the widow is God in his holy habitation.

When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.

There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. And Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. Then said Martha unto Jesus: Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died; but I know that even now whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise at the resurrection of the just.

FOR AN INFANT.

And David said, while the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, who can tell whether God will be gracious unto me that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him; but he shall not return to me.

And they brought young children to Him that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine and goeth into the mountains and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father that one of these little ones should perish.

The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.

A bruised reed he will not break, nor will he quench the smoking flax.

Jesus wept.

PRAYER.

O God, merciful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hast said, Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comfored; under the shadow of thy judgments we come to thee and acknowledge thee to be the Lord alone. Thou hast entered this house with thy chastenings; oh! be thou nigh in thy tender compassion

to these afflicted ones. Bless thy sorrowing servants with thy consolations, which are neither few nor small.

Convert them wholly to thyself, and fill their bleeding hearts with thy love. Make the night of their grief to be light by thy grace.

Deliver us thy servants, we pray thee, from the bondage of our sins, that we may be free from fear of death, and be ready at thy coming. Yea, Lord, for Christ's sake, sanctify us by thy Holy Spirit, that whether we live, we may live unto the Lord, or whether we die, we may die unto the Lord; whether we may live or die, we may be the Lord's. *Amen.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, etc.

The Service at the Church.

[*If the service be performed in whole at the house, then a part of the following may be used in connection with the preceding form.*]

Here the Ninetieth Psalm may be read as an Invocation, and a Funeral Hymn may be sung.

Then let there be read two portions of Scripture, from the Gospel and the Epistles. The following are suitable passages:—

Hear the comfortable words of the Gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ, as they are written in the eleventh chapter of Saint John.

Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know that, even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee. Jesus said unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the Resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the Resurrection, and the Life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

or this:

Hear the Gospel of our Saviour Jesus Christ, in the fifth chapter of Saint John:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the Resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the Resurrection of damnation.

Then, before the second portion of Scripture, may be read one or more of these sentences.

DEATH.

By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death hath passed upon all men, because that all have sinned.

The living know that they must die, for there is one event unto all.

There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of his death, and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver them that are given to it.

They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him, that he should live for ever and not see corruption.

The wise men die, likewise the fool and the brutish person perish, and leave their wealth to others.

One dieth in his full strength, and his bones are moistened with marrow; another dieth in the bitterness of his soul, and never eateth with any pleasure. They shall lie down alike in the dust, and the worms shall cover them. Every man shall follow them, as there are innumerable before them.

As a cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down to the grave shall return no more. He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more. His days are ended, his purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of his heart.

Then let the second portion of Scripture be read, from 1 *Corinthians* 15, *from v.* 35 *to the end.*

Or this, from Revelation 20:—

Hear also the Revelation of St. John:

And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it: and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to his works.

Or this, from Revelation 21:—

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the Tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

PRAYER.

O God, whose days are without end, and whose mercies can not be numbered: Make us, we beseech thee, deeply sensible of the shortness and uncertainty of human life; and let thy Holy Spirit lead us through this vale of misery, in holiness and righteousness, all the day of our lives: that when we shall have served thee in our generation, we may be gathered unto our fathers, having the testimony of a good conscience; in the communion of the Christian Church; in the confidence of

a certain faith; in the comfort of a reasonable, religious, and holy hope; in favour with thee our God, and in perfect charity with the world: all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. *Amen.*

The Service at the Grave.

Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.

What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? Shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave.

I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, write: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.

At the time of the burial the minister shall say:—

The dust returns to dust, and the spirit unto God who gave it: therefore do we now commit the body of our departed *brother* to the earth (or deep) until that hour when earth and sea shall give up their dead, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ to judge the world.

LET US PRAY.

Almighty and everlasting God! we, thine unworthy servants, beseech thee for Christ's sake to have pity upon us! From the borders of the grave, we cry unto thee; for Christ's sake have mercy on us.

It hath pleased thee to call out of this world the soul of our departed friend whose body we have now brought for *his* burial. We humbly entreat thee that we may, with true penitence of heart, receive the warning of thy providence, and consider that for reason of our guilt it is appointed unto us to die, and that in a moment when we think not we may appear before thee. Yea, Lord, by reason of our sins we lie in the midst of death. Spare us, O Lord, O most pitiful and long-suffering Lord God, spare us a little longer that we may take refuge in Christ, abiding in him, that when he shall appear we may have confidence and not be ashamed at his coming. O merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, suffer none of us to live without godliness and die without hope, but constrain us mightily by thy love, that we, being renewed by thy grace and accepted through Christ's intercession, may walk before thee in newness of life, and praise thee for ever among the assembly of the elect, where there shall be no more death, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away; which we implore for the sake of Him who has taught us to say, OUR FATHER &c.

THE BLESSING.

And may the God of Peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Closely connected with the subject of the previous remarks, is the question whether it may not be possible or desirable to introduce into our Sabbath observances, the more particular notice of those peculiar seasons,—momentous epochs in the development of the scheme of redemption, which are observed by a large section of the Christian world. The Advent of our Lord, the Nativity, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Giving of the Holy Spirit,—to the commemoration of these special epochs, a Sabbath might well be set apart; while the services that would be appropriate for Good Friday and the Passion Sabbath find their counterpart in our days of communion. In reference to the latter, there are not a few who think it desirable that the holy ordinance of the Lord's Supper should be more frequently observed; and that a very material improvement would be effected could we dispense with the preparatory observances, except a single devotional service on some day or evening preceding the celebration of that most delightful feast. In fact, with all our just antagonism to Rome, there is in our practice, as regards the Lord's Supper, a species of Romanistic spirit lurking,—and the time-honoured custom of Scotland is certainly at variance with primitive custom. How many invalids are debarred from the observance of this ordinance by reason of the unfrequency of its celebration? What delightful and inspiring views are thus withheld from our congregations! The Christians in primitive times met together weekly to "break bread," as well as to hear words of exhortation, and to join in prayer and praise; and, surely, a quarterly observance of the Lord's Supper would not furnish the too-frequent opportunity of commemorating the sacrifice of the Redeemer.

Our dissenting friends,—and we blame not, but praise them for it,—have here taken a stride in advance of our existing practice; as, in some other respects, they have shown a finer appreciation of the wants of the spiritual nature. Lady Glenorchy's, and, we believe, one or two other chapels in Edinburgh, (we think New Street, formerly, was one), afforded by their more frequent dispensation of this ordinance, opportunities now denied to the devout in our communion. To the "little sacrament" in the first mentioned of these

places, many of our citizens resorted: and is it impossible that a similar practice should be revived?

As matters stand, the writer of these remarks is pained to repeat, that the church, in which he is an office-bearer, is *standing still*,—failing to read the "signs of the times." With the exception of our Endowment Scheme, so zealously worked by Professor Robertson, and which, by God's providence, is building up some of the waste places of our Zion, what progress is the Church of Scotland making in taking up the "land" that is yet to be "possessed"? Is she moving onward, and seeking to comprise the spiritually destitute within her pale,—or are not other bodies stepping in to occupy the outlying ground, and so far depriving her of the honour of being the national church of the land.*

We might say a great deal more in reference to this, but it would lead us to deviate from the main object of our pamphlet. As specimens of what we consider to be peculiarly appropriate and scriptural forms of devotion for the particular seasons to which we have alluded, we commend the following to the notice of our readers. They are extracted from "Liturgical Contributions," contained in the "Mercersburg Quarterly Review" for July 1856, which has been recently forwarded to us by a gentleman, who takes much interest in this matter, and whose statement is appended:—

Prayers for Festival Seasons.

I. ADVENT.

(CANTICLE.)

Sing unto the Lord a new song; and his praise from the end of the earth, ye that go down to the sea, and all that is therein. Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice; let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the tops of the mountains. Let them give glory unto the Lord, and declare His praise among the heathen.

The Lord hath comforted His people; He hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all nations: and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.

Say to the daughter of Zion, behold, thy salvation cometh; behold his reward is with him, and his work before him. Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee. Unto you, that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings!

The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it. Death shall be swallowed up in victory, and God will wipe away all tears from our eyes. And

* See on this subject a pamphlet entitled "The Church of Scotland's Duty to the Masses," by the Rev. A. R. Bonar of Canongate, which we commend to general attention.

it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Sanctify and prepare yourselves to look upon the glory of our God; for the Lord cometh. Prepare ye the way of the Lord and make his paths straight; let us serve Him with gladness and come before his presence with singing! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord!

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

II. CHRISTMAS.

1.

(CANTICLE.)

Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy; for unto you is born this day, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord!

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men! Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given, and the government is upon his shoulder. And his name is, Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.

God hath remembered his covenant and sent salvation to his people. When the fulness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. Israel is saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation.

This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Behold, now is the accepted time! Behold, now is the day of salvation!

Say among the heathen, that the Lord reigneth. Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad; for He shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with his truth: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord! Blessed be the kingdom of our father David! Hosannah in the highest!

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end! Amen:

PRAYER.

Almighty God, Father of all mercies, through whose grace we are permitted once more to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we approach into thy presence at this time with holy joy, to praise and magnify thy great name for the unspeakable gift of thy Son, who hath brought life and immortality to light. Thou hast visited and redeemed thy people, and raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of thy servant David, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve thee without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our life. Thou hast gloriously fulfilled thy promises, given to our first parents after the fall, to the patriarchs, to Moses and the prophets, and to all thine ancient people who waited in hope for the salvation of Israel. When the fulness of the time was come, thou didst send forth thy Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons and inheritance of everlasting life.

Truly great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified

in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

Bestow upon us, O God, a simple, child-like faith, that with the shepherds and the wise men of the East, we may visit the manger of Bethlehem, there to adore the new born King of Israel and offer unto him the tribute of our hearts. Give us grace to behold the glory shining through the veil of his humanity, the glory of the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. May Christ indeed be born in us by the power of the Holy Ghost. And as he, in infinite love to us poor sinners, descended from heaven to earth, and assumed our nature, and became flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone, so may we have power to ascend from earth to heaven and to be partakers of his divine nature, to the glory of thy great and adorable name.

Finally, we beseech thee to extend, through thy ministering servants, the good tidings of great joy, which we hear this day, and which are for all people, to the uttermost parts of the earth. Let the day spring from on high visit every nation to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide their feet in the way of peace. Hasten the time, when the angel's anthem shall resound over all lands: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A SECOND PRAYER.

O thou God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, at this holy season, when thy believing people in all parts of the world are met to celebrate the memory of the Saviour's birth, we too lift up our hearts to thee, and bring thee our humble tribute of praise and thanksgiving.

Thou didst so love the world as to send thine only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life. Thou didst suffer him to be born of the blessed Virgin, to assume our nature, to take upon him our infirmities and bear our sicknesses, to die the cursed death of the cross, that we might live.

O Lord, we joyfully acknowledge and thank thee, that by this birth and this death we attain unto everlasting life and become heirs of thy kingdom. We adore thy name. We praise thy mercy. All the angelic hosts admire thy glorious grace; and, as long as men shall dwell upon the earth thy praise shall resound, and every tongue shall sing: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good-will toward men!

Jesus, thou Son of God, we bless thee for becoming flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone, and beseech thee, that we may be made partakers of the fruits of thy redemption. Thou, who art the Son of God, the joy and glory of the human race, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us! Thou, who didst descend to earth, and become like one of us in all things, sin only excepted; who didst die and rise again and return to the bosom of the Father, there to prepare mansions of rest for thy people, hear our prayer, and let our songs of praise come up acceptably before thee.

Thou, who didst come to destroy the works of the Devil, deliver us from all our sins and make us able to renounce them. As thou wert born in a manger, and didst lead a life of poverty and sorrow, and humble thyself unto death, even the death of the cross, so may we also have power to despise the vain pomps of this world, and strive only after the heavenly glory and eternal felicity, which thou hast

purchased for us with thy blood. As thou hast loved us, so also may we love thee and let nothing separate us from thy love.

O God, because we believe thy dear Son was born to raise us to eternal life, teach us rightly to perceive that by this faith and this hope we are bound to purify ourselves even as he is pure, so that we may worthily celebrate thy praise and enjoy the glory, which is yet to be revealed to us; and when our great Redeemer shall come again, a second time, in the clouds of heaven, with all his holy angels, may we become like him, in the kingdom of his glory, where he lives and reigns, God over all, blessed for ever! Amen.

We reluctantly omit the New Year's day Service, which is very impressive, but cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of quoting the "Good Friday" service, which with the "Act of Humiliation" following, may suggest useful materials for devotional service on Communion Sabbaths:—

1.

Canticle.

Christ our passover was offered for us as on this day. He was delivered for our offences; He bore our sins in his own body on the tree, and the Lord laid on him the iniquity of us all. His soul was sorrowful, even unto death; He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter; He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He was taken from prison and from judgment; He was cut off out of the land of the living.

Sing praises unto our God and the Lamb, and say: Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; thou hast made us unto our God, kings and priests. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, for ever and ever. All creatures which are in heaven, and on the earth, ascribe blessing and honour nnto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb! Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ. If God be for us, who can be against us? He spared not his only begotten Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him also freely give us all things.

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is, and which was, and which is to come, God over all blessed for ever more. Amen.

PRAYER.

O Lord Jesus Christ, eternal Son of God, our blessed Redeemer, give us grace, we beseech thee, worthily to celebrate on this day thine unfathomable love to a sinful and guilty world. Thou wast pleased to descend from the throne of thy heavenly glory, to assume our human nature, to be persecuted, denied, betrayed, condemned, and nailed to the cross, that we miserable sinners might be delivered from the curse of the law and escape the just sentance of everlasting damnation. Thou wast wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. The

chastisement of our peace was upon thee; and with thy stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on thee the iniquity of us all. Thou, who knew no sin, hast been made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in thee. Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred and tongue, and people and nation, and by one offering hast perfected for ever them that are sanctified.

Therefore, with the ten thousand times ten thousand and all the heavenly host of the redeemed, we would unite in saying: Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and blessing. We bless thee for all the burdens thou hast borne, for all the tears thou hast wept, for all the pains thou hast suffered, for every drop of blood thou hast shed, for every word of comfort thou hast spoken on the cross, for every conflict with the powers of darkness, and for thine eternal victory over the terrors of death and the pains of hell.

Impress upon this day, O Lord, a lively sense of the terrible nature of our sin and guilt, which called for so costly a sacrifice, and of the unutterable love of God, who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. May we hate and abhor sin more than ever, and live hereafter not unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again. May we always remember that we are not our own, but bought with a price, and bound to glorify God in our body and in our spirit, which are thine. Give us grace to cleave to thy cross in prosperity and adversity, in the trials and temptations of life, in the agonies of death and in the day of judgment. Make us willing and ready to suffer and to die for thee, who didst die for us, that being partakers of thy sufferings, we may become partakers also of thy glorious resurrection and ascension.

And now unto Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness and the First-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth, unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

3.

AN ACT OF HUMILIATION AND PRAISE FOR THE DEATH OF CHRIST.

The Lamb, that was slain, is worthy to receive might, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and praise, and blessing.

[*Congregation:* Amen.]

Cast yourselves down, and bend your hearts before the Lord that redeemed us! Unto the Lamb that was slain, give glory! Let us give thanks unto our Lord and Saviour, and say:

Lord Jesus Christ! Thou holy and spotless Son of God, that takest away the sin of the world, we heartily thank thee for thy holy passion, and thy death, for thy sorrow and anguish of heart, for thy pains and wounds, for all that thou didst endure in body and soul. Thou didst come into the world to save sinners; the light shone into darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not. Thy people Israel, the seed of Abraham, rejected thee; the Scribes and Pharisees blasphemed thee: the Sadducees mocked thee; the High-priest and the Council unjustly condemned thee, the Son of God; the people that yesterday cried unto thee, *Hosannah*, to-day cried out, Crucify Him. The heathen Governor declared thine innocence, and yet de-

livered thee over into the hands of the unrighteous; thou wast dragged from judgment seat to judgment seat, scourged and beaten, a derision of the people. Thy disciples forsook thee; Judas betrayed thee; Peter denied thee. Lo, the sins of the whole world conspired and rose up against thee, and thou didst bear them.

[*Congregation:* For this we thank thee, Lord Jesus.]

Lord, Lord, merciful Saviour and Son of Man, thou didst reward hatred with love, cruelty with compassion. Neither malice nor blindness, neither craft nor weakness could make thee swerve from fulfilling the purpose of thy grace. Thou didst willingly deliver up thyself to scorn and reproach; and as a lamb led to the slaughter is dumb, so thou openedst not thy mouth. Upon the disciple that denied thee, thou didst cast a look of sorrowful love; in the very moment, when the multitude demanded thy crucifixion, thou wast resolved to pour out thy blood for their redemption; and even on the cross, thou didst open the gates of Paradise to the malefactor, and pray for thy murderers!

[*Congregation:* For this we thank thee, Lord Jesus.]

Lord, Lord, eternal only begotten Son of God! Thou didst not look upon the sin of the world like one of us, thou hadst no pleasure in our wickedness. Thou, Eternal Son of the Father, didst not overlook or excuse the rebellion of our race against the Father, and against thee, his anointed, but didst concur in the counsel of eternal justice, that upon sin the wrath and curse of God must rest! But, O Lord, in thee with eternal and inexorable justice hath also appeared everlasting unfathomable love. Thou didst take the curse of sin, which was due to us, upon thyself. Thou didst endure the agony of soul, which we should have endured. Thou didst tremble in Gethsemane before the strict justice of God, where we should have trembled! Surely thou didst bear our griefs and carry our sorrows!

[*Congregation:* For this we thank thee, Lord Jesus.]

Lord Jesus Christ, thou hast manifested all the might and eternal energy of Love, and illustrated the glory of thy Father upon the earth, when thou didst, as our surety, give thyself to the cross, and didst bear the sins of all mankind, in our stead!

We thank thee that thou didst suffer thyself to be bound, that we might be made free; accused, that we might be made righteous; reviled, that we might come to honour. We thank thee, that thou didst wear the crown of thorns, that we might receive the crown of righteousness. Thou didst suffer thyself to be clothed with purple, that we might be arrayed in the white robe of salvation. Thou, the Prince of Life, didst bow thy head in death, that we, the bond-servants of death might be raised to life in thee. The penalty was laid on thee, that we might have peace, and through thy wounds we are healed!

[*Congregation:* For this we thank thee, Lord Jesus.]

Lord, our Saviour and Redeemer! The sin of the world, that brought thee to the cross, also dwelleth in us. Behold, we acknowledge our unrighteousness, and do not cloak our sin before thee. Of the flesh we have inherited corruption; death has passed upon us, because we all have sinned. The folly of the Jewish people, who esteemed not their salvation, dwelleth also in us; we too, by nature, seek not the things which are above, but those things which are upon the earth. The hatred of the high priests and scribes dwelleth also in us; we too hate, by nature, him who speaketh to us the truth. The unbelief of the Sadduces dwelleth in us; we too, by nature, cling to the things we can see and handle, and despise the invisible truth. The unrighteousness of the heathen governor dwelleth in us; we

too, inquire more after our pleasure and ease, than after the will of thy Father. The covetousness, which led the betrayer to his crime, has its root also in our hearts. The weakness of Peter is our weakness; Lord, how often have we denied thee! O Lord, we confess with deep shame: In all our sins, we have sinned against thee! Ours, even ours is the sin which thou didst bear. Even our sins brought thee to the cross!

[*Congregation:* Have mercy upon us, Lord Jesus.]

Eternal, compassionate High Priest, have mercy upon us! Forgive us our sins for the sake of thy death! Wash us thoroughly from all our uncleanness; let the remembrance of thy bitter sufferings be ever present to our souls, and let us never forget, how much it cost thee to redeem us. Let a glance at thy cross make us tremble at every sin! Let the blessed assurance, that, through thee our sins are forgiven, kindle in our hearts the flame of love and thankfulness.

O Lord, yet once more, we lift our hands to thee and bless thee, Lord Jesus, for thy death. Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Everlasting adoration and praise be unto thee. Lord Jesus Christ, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit, in unity of essence, livest and reignest true God for evermore.

[*Congregation:* Amen.]

We also give the Easter-day Service:—

V. EASTER-DAY.

1.

Canticle.

Christ our Passover has risen. He was dead, and behold he is alive for evermore, and hath the keys of hell and death.

Christ our Passover was dead, a sacrifice for our sins. Therefore we keep the feast no more with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Christ is risen from the dead, and henceforth dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. He died unto sin once, but now he liveth unto God; the Prince of Life could not be holden of death.

God did not leave his soul in the grave, nor suffer his Holy One to see corruption. He was dead, and behold he is alive again, and hath the keys of hell and of death.

Christ is risen, the first fruits of them that slept. Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; and as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive, at his coming.

Death is swallowed up for ever! O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Glory be to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in the Church that is in Christ, for ever and ever! Amen.

THE PRAYER.

Blessed be God, who, by his mighty power, wrought in Christ, and raised him from the dead!

Thou didst not, O gracious Father! suffer thine Holy One to see corruption;

thou didst show him the path of life; thou didst raise up thy Son Jesus; thou didst make him both Lord and Christ; and thou wilt also raise us up from the death of sin, together with him, and make us sit with him in heavenly places.

Blessing and honour, be likewise unto thee, thou Prince of Life, thou that sayest unto us: "I was dead, and behold, I am alive again for evermore, and hold the keys of hell and of death!" Thou art risen, and our faith is not vain; we are no more in our sins, and those who have fallen asleep in thee are not lost; thou art risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that sleep. Death is swallowed up in victory. O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory?

Speak, O risen Lord, by thy Spirit, words of eternal life to our souls, and call unto them: Because I live, ye shall live also, that henceforth, we may not live unto ourselves, but unto thee who didst die and rise again for us. Yea, let the hearts of all that to this hour are sunk in the death of sin, be penetrated by the voice of thine Almighty power, the voice that cries: Awake, thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light, so that they may now leave their dark grave, and as children of light, walk henceforth in newness of life.

O Thou, who art the Resurrection and the Life, make the Holy Supper also of which we shall this day partake, a source of blessing to them who are strong in faith, and to them who are weak, that by means of this spiritual repast all may be stirred up to a daily growth in the divine life.

Endue all that are in authority with wisdom and the fear of thy holy name, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.

Give to the churches, which thou hast purchased with thine own blood, shepherds who shall take heed unto themselves, and to the whole flock, and let all teachers hold fast the form of sound words of faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.

Grant unto all parents grace, that they may bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and incline all children to honour their parents, that it may be well with them.

Refresh with thy peace, O Prince of Life, all who are in distress and temptation; have compassion upon all who are wrestling with disease and death; make them living witnesses to the power of thy resurrection, that each may be enabled to say from blessed experience: I know that my Redeemer liveth.

O Lord, our Saviour! when we pass through the valley of the shadow of death, may thy resurrection be to our faith a sure pledge of participation in the unfading inheritance of that eternal life which thou hast prepared for all them that love thy appearing.

O thou God of peace, who hast brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work, to do thy will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in thy sight, through Jesus Christ thy beloved Son our Lord; in whose name we say:

Our Father, &c.

Our readers who have paid attention to the matter will doubtless think that these forms of devotion are highly appropriate in themselves. We shall only give another specimen,—the prayer for "Whitsunday," as it is styled, but

which may well suggest hints for other occasions,—omitting the preliminary verses:—

PRAYER.

O thou Author of peace and Lover of concord, in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life; and whose service is perfect freedom; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit; and give us grace, whereby we may serve thee acceptably, with reverence and with godly fear.

We thank thee for all that thy beloved Son Jesus did, and taught, and suffered. We especially bless thee, at this time, for those gracious words of comfort which he spake in the immediate prospect of the hour and power of darkness. Do thou work in our souls a principle of living faith in Him, that amidst all the sorrows of this mortal life, we may be enabled to place our confidence in thee, and elevate our thoughts and affections to those many mansions in his Father's house, which our exalted Saviour has gone to prepare for his believing people.

O ascended Lord and Saviour Jesus! we thank thee, that having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, thou didst so wonderfully, as on this day, fill thy disciples with the blessed gift, baptizing them with the Holy Ghost and enabling them to go forth, as thy ambassadors to all nations, speaking with new tongues, and proclaiming far and wide, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.

O Holy Spirit! Thou who art true and eternal God, with the Father and the Son; who art also given to us, to make us, by a true faith, partakers of Christ and all his benefits; fulfil in us, we beseech thee, the mission of love, and abide with us for ever.

Spirit of light and truth, lead us into all truth, enlighten our minds and expel from them all darkness. Spirit of prayer and supplication, teach us to pray aright, and thou thyself make intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Spirit of power, assist us by thy might, be with us in our temptations, confirm us continually by thy grace, and evermore draw us towards that which is good.

Spirit of holiness, sanctify our understanding and our heart, purify our affections and enable us to be faithful each one in his calling. Spirit of comfort, our Comforter, abide with us for ever; comfort us in all our tribulation, and fill us at all times with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Spirit of peace, infuse into us the temper of peace, meekness, and mutual love.

O Holy Spirit! thou Spirit of God, who didst descend upon the Apostles in cloven tongues like as of fire, and bestow upon them power to proclaim the wonderful works of God; kindle in our hearts the celestial fire of holy thoughts, and fervent prayers; fill us with true zeal to glorify thee and edify our neighbour, by words and deeds which are well pleasing in thy sight!

O God, cast us not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from us! Suffer us not to quench, grieve, or resist Him. Rather may he dwell in us, as his temple; may he be our guide through this mortal life; so that we may rejoice always in his heavenly consolations, and having finished our course may attain at last to the resurrection of the body, by the Spirit of Christ which dwelleth in us, and be found worthy to enter into thy glory; there to praise Thee, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

From a very suggestive article in the same work, we extract the subjoined remarks on the modern style of prayer:—

The modern prayer is subjective; it is the individual praying for himself with a conscious personal application; the modern prayer is discursive, it endeavours to pray for everything by way of particular mention; so that, to be at all inclusive and satisfactory, it must become scientific. That is to say, it lies under the necessity of formal classification as to its elements, and so is constantly led off towards the catechism, towards the doctrinal symbol. The Liturgical prayer, on the opposite hand, gives to the mind and heart a series of collectual forms, pregnant sentences, sacred formulas and voiceful responsals, which have the force of prescriptive embodiments, suggestive of whole classes of religious needs, feelings, states, and desires; so that the same utterance in the service will be equally applicable to very different states of mind among the people. For example, the particular and narrative subjective prayer can only be followed by those whose present state is met as it proceeds in its petitions. Of course, we mean, as it respects the satisfaction of special states of heart. If it be a good prayer, it can be followed by all present; but it comes home to special feelings only as it supplies particular applications to such existing states of feeling. Hence the prayer must be very long, very particular, and very numerical. On the other hand, let the call *Sursum corda* in the Liturgy come, and all men, the penitent, the heavy laden, the happy and rejoicing, can equally find it good to lift up their spirits to the heavenly Presence. So too, how many states of heart are ever to be found in the congregation, to which the single versicle, "The Lord be with you," and the required return of blessing, "and with thy spirit," is a more healing cordial, and a more helpful prayer, than any personal petition could be, at the time? Thus, the Liturgical prayer is objective, it looks to heaven, it worships with angels, it moves amidst bodily realities, and it prays for spiritual things under tangible forms; thus leading the individual out of himself, and turning the particular voice of his private devotions into the one great voice of the Body, which is the Church. This is a point which we feel to be of the utmost importance. It is our firm conviction, for example, that to a spiritually minded Christian, the liturgical prayer is more spiritual, more scripturally spiritual, and more safe, or at least more catholic, as the norm for the cultivation of the devotional habits, and so far forth of the Christian character and piety, than the particularising form, which enumerates every actual present state, and gives expression to religious feelings only, or chiefly, in the way of express and literal petitions. How often do we find young Christians, down hearted and melancholic, as well as excessively pietistic Christians, to whom we would say, leave off for a while the direct consideration of your individual cases, and sing a hallelujah Psalm, praise the Lord in a Doxology, say the Lord's Prayer, make supplication for the "king and all in authority," forget yourself in the body and mingle your note in the universal voice of the Church. How often is the private Christian in that state when labouring under trial or temptation, he has well nigh strangled himself in his vain attempts to elaborate his prayers to his particular distress, and the Lord's Prayer, if he is so fortunate as to be accustomed to its use, comes in like an angel from the skies, leading him out of prison. Now we are free to admit, that the Christian who thinks, in the petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," of nothing but temporal blessings, is in danger of resting on carnal ground; but the Christian, who, together with this, and under this form, holds in the view of his spirit, that unspeakable mystery of the Incarnation, through the grace of which the Holy Spirit feeds his soul and body and spirit, —the Christian who, under the form of earthly bread, and while praying for earthly bread and all things, is praying for the consummation of the bread of life within him,

—*that* Christian we believe to be making quite as spiritual a prayer, as when he is praying more directly for abstract spiritual graces. It is our opinion, indeed, that, so doing, he is engaged in making a *more* spiritual prayer than the other, and one infinitely more so, than what generally goes by the name of "spiritual." The inspired word of God teaches us, that the prayer for spiritual blessings under tangible and actual forms, should characterise our habits of prayer, for the same reason that the Person of our Saviour should characterise our theological and religious views. As that Christian is the most scripturally spiritual, who makes the most of what the Holy Scriptures make the All in All, namely, the Lord Jesus, the Son of David, the Son of God; so that habit of prayer is the most scripturally, and of course, the most truly spiritual, which is formed upon the Lord's Prayer. The Lord's Prayer is like the Liturgical prayers, it is not like the modern prayer.

The following remarks also deserve attention:—

Let us get the best service we can. We believe that any one of the Reformed Liturgies is preferable to an unstudied service; while, at the same time, we believe that they are all so very defective, that we should hesitate to fix the weekly devotions of a congregation to the perpetual use of any one of them. Still we are not permitted to look upon this matter on merely abstract grounds. Doubtless there are clergymen in our Churches who do make the service a matter of most conscientious study, and whose services, therefore, are satisfactory and edifying. But when we call to mind the cases of our younger brethren, when we recollect how many of our ministers feel that they ought *not* to make liturgical preparations, when we think of the feeble churches on our borders, in remote country places, and of churches, without pastors, and then too when we think of our crying need of baptismal, eucharistic, marriage and funeral offices, we are almost ready to say, let us have the Liturgy, and let us have it fixed; though it be no more complete than Baxter's or Calvin's, still it would be far better, on the whole, than the actual state of things. There is, however, a more excellent way. Let us have a good and large selection of the Reformed Liturgies printed, and let us have a large collection of the old Liturgies, at least those known as the four great Liturgies, printed with them, and let us have a copy of the Book of Common Prayer by their side. If this were done, and our ministers would consent to study these volumes, the very best thing would, in the end, be secured and accomplished. We are not to forget, however, that the people also are of the Church. We may not impose a form on any people. We may not volunteer to trouble any people by the question, who are getting on well enough for themselves, and do not wish to be troubled about it. We may judge their way to be very defective, but if they are not in positive error, it behoves us to proceed very carefully and then to do very kindly, and to do without noise, whatever we may think it our duty to do, in order to improve the devotional practice of such as wish for improvement. The work, however, like every reformation work, must in some way proceed from the clergy. Our own opinion is, that it should proceed in the way intimated. Let a minister study the old, as well as the Reformation forms. This will naturally affect his own practice: he will come to make liturgical prayers more than didactic prayers, Trinity prayers more than Judaic prayers; he will make more of the simple Word of God in the service: he will of course use the Lord's Prayer; he will introduce Trinity hymns, instead of sermon hymns; he will use the creed; he will introduce the doxologies; he may get his people to chaunt the *Te Deum*, and the greater *Gloria;* he may even, after a

season, invite his people to say the Lord's Prayer with him, to say Amen, and to read the Psalter together. All these things may a minister gradually do, if so be he conscientiously believe the people's piety would be benefited by them. If not, he had better leave their ways alone. Now when these things are done, a proper liturgical work is done. A people thus prudently and piously trained, will soon feel the propriety of a common attitude of worship, soon feel the sententious and suggestive force of a good office, soon recover the objective idea and feeling of the Church, and it will not be long before they will request that these forms be printed for themselves and for their children. The way is then open, and we can answer their request by placing in their hands, and placing in the pulpit, such a Liturgy as the united work of the primitive and the Reformation Church, in these respects, will furnish. Luther and Basil, Bucer and Cyril, Cranmer and Ambrose and Calvin and Augustine, will have joined hands around the holy altar of the Church and the true day of freedom and love, of good will and good service, will have come.

The question regarding the propriety of having very considerable additions made to the materials now at command for publicly celebrating the praises of God, has frequently been debated. The idea has been repudiated by a class of persons, who, from conscientious motives, but, in our opinion, with mistaken views, disapprove of employing in the service of the sanctuary any thing beyond the contents of the Book of Psalms, as presented in our own antique, often spirited, and generally faithful version. Consistently enough, these maintainers of former practices look with a jealous eye even on the Paraphrases, or metrical versions of passages of Scripture, which many years since obtained the sanction of the General Assembly, and have been long in common use; a collection which, as a whole—for we will not undertake to defend every stanza or particular expression—is of high excellence, the materials of which a portion of them is made up having been judiciously selected with great attention to good taste and simplicity of expression, while the original compositions introduced are, in general, of corresponding excellence.

A somewhat strong feeling, however, has been entertained, that if we admit the propriety of making use of paraphrases and hymns in public worship and in family devotion, the collection referred to is one which must be considered as imperfect and incomplete. While the composition of a really good hymn is one of the highest efforts of consecrated genius, so many individuals of piety and poetic talent, since the days of

Watts and Doddridge—from whose compositions the selected materials of our collection of Paraphrases were chiefly culled —have added their contributions to the general stock, that the subject has very properly of late excited a considerable amount of interest. Since 1781, when the collection of Paraphrases now in use was ordered by the General Assembly to be transmitted for consideration to the various Presbyteries, permission being meantime given for their use in public worship, in congregations where the minister found this to be for edification—the expense of printing the collection being likewise ordered to be defrayed from the public funds of the Church—many rich contributions have been made to the "service of song;" and the warmer and more fervid feelings of devotion may be gratified by selections from the compositions of individuals whose hymns were not included in the collection appended to our version of the Psalms. We are all well aware, indeed, that a committee was, many years since, appointed to consider and report upon the subject, of which the late Dr Brunton was convener, and that applications were made for assistance in various quarters. Year after year, however, no progress of importance was reported; and at last the subject seemed consigned to oblivion. In the heat of contest about questions of patronage and other matters of debate, a subject of this kind could hardly hope to gain favourable attention; but we were glad to think, that with the return of internal peace, when the members of our Church have more leisure for considering what may tend to the comfort and edification of their flocks, the question has been revived; and that a committee was appointed, not to make alterations on the version of the Psalms, which is hallowed by so many endearing associations, or to exclude from the list any of the Paraphrases now in use, (though there are several which we would have no objection to see dismissed), but to supplement that collection by additions carefully considered and judiciously selected from amongst the great mass of materials at command.

The work, even had it been carried through, was rather long of being entered upon, when we remember that almost

every other body of Christians in the land had previously turned their attention to the subject, with various measures of success; that none of the compositions of the bard of Olney, nor of James Montgomery, of Charles Wesley, or Heber, or many others whom we might name, could be employed in the services of our national Zion; and that but recently the United Presbyterian Church had given its sanction to a very voluminous collection, respecting the merits of which we may hereafter take occasion to speak. Even our Sabbath School children were in this respect better provided. The lambs of the flock enjoyed a larger amount of privilege, in the delightful and pleasing work of offering up praise; while the great bulk of the worshippers in the sanctuary were restricted to a more contracted field. Recently, however, as the work has been attempted, and, averse as so many of our fathers and brethren, strongly wedded to old ways, and sometimes unreasonably jealous of improvement, have been to regard it with favour—the subject has at least been mooted, though no practical result has yet accrued, and we suppose that the committee may be considered as being, to all practical purposes, defunct. It were an act of injustice, to the memory of one who was devotedly attached to the Church of our fathers, not to state, that the impulse to this new and apparently hopeful attempt was given by the late Mr Grainger, whose collection, the solace of many a private hour, and the companion of his journeys, was, we believe, placed at the service of the members of Committee.

That collection, deserving of approbation as a memorial of its author's piety, and a proof of the lively interest which he took in the matter attempted, was, we rather think, intended to answer two distinct purposes—the furnishing of a variety of hymns adapted for use not only in the sanctuary, but in the family circle and in the Christian's private retirement. A part only, therefore, of this posthumous work could be serviceable for the purpose in view; and in addition to the observance of this broad and most obvious line of demarcation, a variety of other requisites need to be considered, in order suitably to provide for the end desired. "A hymn," said the late James Montgomery, no incompetent judge of this

species of devotional composition, " must have a beginning, a middle, and an end. It should have a distinct subject, and that subject should be simple, not complicated, so that whatever skill or labour might be required in the author to develope his plan, there should be little or none required on the part of the reader to comprehend it. There should be a manifest gradation in the thoughts, and their mutual dependence should be so perceptible, that they could not be transposed without injuring the unity of the piece; every line carrying forward the connection, and every verse adding a well-proportioned limb to a symmetrical body." We must not have a series of independent verses, strung together as a variety of images or ideas were suggested to the mind and fancy of the writer: the repetition of figures, phrases, and ideas, that are stereotyped and commonplace. The use of vulgar expressions, of mere word-painting, of elaborate or fantastic imagery, must be avoided; and while the great truths of the Gospel are to afford the subject matter, these truths, whether arising from Scripture narrative, conveying promises of help to the believer, embodying the confession of unworthiness, or expressive of holy resolution, are to be arrayed in befitting garb. We must not have the high-flown rhapsodies of the enthusiast, expressions of endearment unbefitting the divine Majesty, or the embodiment of sentiments peculiar only to an individnal, in hymns intended for the worship of the sanctuary. These ought to be so general that every pious worshipper may be able to join in them; they should be suited to the variety of times and seasons, and applicable to those of every rank and condition in life; as public prayers, while adapted as far as possible to the situation of individuals, ought to contain petitions in which all can join, and thanksgivings in which every devout person can unite. Still farther: what may be beautiful, elevating, and chaste as devotional poetry, may be quite unsuited for employment as a hymn; for example, even Montgomery's fine stanzas on Prayer are liable, in no small measure, to this exception; and many other examples of a more flagrant nature might be quoted, from a great variety of collections which we have examined. The late Bishop Heber's other-

wise excellent and highly polished compositions are often exceedingly faulty in this respect. An almost ludicrous feeling of inappropriateness arises when we hear a mixed congregation asked to sing the familiar paraphrase commencing "In life's gay morn;" or "The hour of my departure's come;" or that which begins, "Rulers of Sodom, hear the voice." So, too, the remark holds good of the following stanzas of Heber, beautiful as they are, and which some of our readers may thank us for introducing.

"The winds were howling o'er the deep,
Each wave a watery hill;
The Saviour wakened from His sleep,
He spake, and all was still.

"The madman in a tomb had made
His mansion of despair:
Woe to the traveller who strayed
With heedless footstep there!

"The chains hung broken from his arm—
Such strength can hell supply—
And fiendish hate and fierce alarm,
Flashed from his hollow eye.

"He met that glance so thrilling sweet
He heard those accents mild,
And, melting at Messiah's feet,
Wept like a weaned child.

"Oh, madder than the raving man!
Oh, deafer than the sea!
How long the time since Christ began
To call in vain on me!

"He called me when my thoughtless prime
Was early ripe to ill;
I passed from folly on to crime,
And yet He called me still.

"He called me in the time of dread,
When death was full in view;
I trembled on my feverish bed,
And rose to sin anew!

"Yet could I hear him once again,
As I have heard of old;
Methinks He should not call in vain
His wanderer to the fold."

The stanzas entitled "Jerusalem," are liable to the same objection, and likewise the following hymn:—

"There was joy in Heaven!
There was joy in Heaven!
When this goodly world to frame
The Lord of might and mercy came:
Shouts of joy were heard on high,
And the stars sang from the sky—
'Glory to God in Heaven!'

"There was joy in Heaven!
There was joy in Heaven!
When the billows, heaving dark,
Sank around the stranded ark,
And the rainbow's watery span
Spake of mercy, hope to man,
And peace withGod in Heaven!

"There was joy in Heaven!
There was joy in Heaven!
When of love the midnight beam
Dawn'd on the towers of Bethlehem;
And along the echoing hill
Angels sang—'On earth good-will,
And glory in the Heaven!

"There is joy in Heaven!
There is joy in Heaven!
When the sheep that went astray
Turns again to virtue's way;
When the soul, by grace subdued,
Sobs its prayer of gratitude,
Then is there joy in Heaven!

Of another cast, though slight in its texture, is the hymn for Easter Day, which is not so well known in the north, as many of Heber's other compositions—

"God is gone up with a merry noise
Of saints that sing on high;
With His own right hand and His holy arm
He hath won the victory!

"Now empty are the courts of death,
And crushed thy sting, despair;
And roses bloom in the desert tomb,
For Jesus hath been there!

" And He hath tamed the strength of Hell,
And dragg'd him through the sky,
And captive behind His chariot wheel,
He hath bound captivity.

" God is gone up with a merry noise
Of saints that sing on high;
With His own right hand and His holy arm
He hath won the victory!

Of recent collections intended for use in public worship, that issued under the auspices of the United Presbyterian Church is certainly sufficiently voluminous. It contains not less than 468 compositions, of very various merit, besides a number of doxologies, and seems to have been compiled on the principle of containing something adapted to every taste —good, bad, and indifferent. Great liberties, in the way of the omission of stanzas and the alteration of expressions, have not unfrequently been taken. A whole stanza, for instance, of Heber's well-known missionary hymn has been excluded; and we might specify a number of other compositions that have been cut down, sometimes to the violation of the purpose intended by the author. Why should not there, however, be liberty granted to use in the worship of our Church, such hymns as the following—"Christ the Lord is risen today;" "Come, ye sinners poor and wretched;" "Hark, the herald angels sing;" "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds;" "Jesus! refuge of my soul;" "Lo! He comes with clouds descending," though even in this fine composition there are deviations from the original and better form; "Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing;" "O'er the gloomy hills of darkness;" with several others which we might specify.

The points we have adverted to are well deserving of consideration. But, though the matter has been so often talked of, as yet nothing has been done; and we are beginning almost to despair, after the sad experience of our psalmody committee, and the poor result of their labours, (yet still not altogether worthy of the treatment met with at the hands of certain learned doctors a few assemblies since,) and the manner in which the affair seems almost to have been set to sleep,—we almost despair of any such practical work being speedily

done, or done to purpose, unless the public voice shall insist upon it. We long that in our church, adherence to conventional practice were less pertinaciously insisted upon. We want her to read the "signs of the times." We should like to see her more free, generous, and expansive, with services for the intellectual and polished, as well as for the poorest ofthe poor. Why should we not, as far as we can, gratify the earnest longings of many, instead of moving round in the same unvaried course? Is that portion of our devotional service,—the only part in which our people audibly join—never to be suitably enlarged from the vast body of materials available for this purpose? Alas! too much of our committee work is little else than talk, issuing often in a most wearisome and profitless expenditure of time. Would that learning were more largely cultivated amongst us, and that we made it an endeavour to fan the flame of devotion among our people, providing for that purpose suitable and wholesome aliment! Would that a spirit of wisdom might be vouchsafed, if it is not going too far to hope so—even to the prescriptive leaders in our church courts, and more especially to the select gentlemen, clerical and lay, who are drawn as by magnetic influence, round the Clerk's Table of the General Assembly!

As belonging to a church untramelled, or, as others might style it, unadorned by the possession of dignities and prizes, the writer of these remarks cannot but express the satisfaction which, in common with many thousands of his countrymen, he feels at the conduct of our most gracious Sovereign, during the period of her annual sojourn at Balmoral. There Queen Victoria drops, as far as may be, the cares and pomp of state; showing, with her illustrious consort, so deservedly had in respect on account of his talents and virtues, that understanding of the spirit of the constitution, and that appreciation of the rights and privileges of the Church of Scotland, which leads her to overleap the mere conventionalities of outward practice, and humbly and reverently, as becomes a subject of the King of kings, to worship in the parish church of Crathie. May it not be looked upon as a sign in reference to the matter we have treated of, that the

preacher who has, for the second time, been honoured by a royal command to print the sermon which he delivered before our most gracious Sovereign, is alleged to have made, in the introductory part of the service, free and ample use of the liturgy of the Church of England,—we presume, of that portion of it which is derived from ancient sources, and reflects the feelings as, in another tongue, it embodies the sentiments of the church catholic in bygone ages; whatever is best in that liturgy being a matter of inheritance. Not less might it gratify her Majesty's Scottish subjects, were the ancient and storied chapel at Holyrood repaired,—once more to echo the lowly accents of prayer, and resound to the heart of praise, instead of its being allowed to moulder away under the dilapidating influence of time and exposure, more particularly as it is in close proximity to a densely-peopled locality, and might well be restored to its former use, as the church of the parishioners of the Canongate, from whom it was taken at a very inauspicious period of our national history.

TO

THE REV. DR CRAWFORD OF EDINBURGH,

CONVENER OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S COMMITTEE ON "AIDS TO DEVOTION."

EDINBURGH, 20*th April* 1857.

REVEREND SIR,

I have to apologise for the liberty I take in addressing you in your official character as Convener of the Committee appointed by the last General Assembly for the purpose of considering the best method of supplying a desideratum long felt in the Church—viz., a proper Manual of Devotion. The importance of this subject has for some time forcibly pressed itself on my mind; and having given it much consideration, I now venture to address you in regard to it, in the hope that, whether my suggestions are in any way acted upon or not, the knowledge that others in the Church of Scotland are anxiously waiting for some movement on the part of the Committee, may induce some active steps to be taken to carry out the object for which the Committee was appointed.

It may be considered quite superfluous to say anything in support of the Manual now proposed, the need of it being so self-evident, and the want of it having been so long and so generally experienced; yet a few words in favour of it may not be altogether out of place.

No one can read the details from the Colonies in our *Missionary Record*, without lamenting the destitute condition of our brethren in respect to the privileges and enjoyment of Gospel ordinances. In many churches in our North American colonies, there have been no services for a series of years, from the want of ministers. In these trying circumstances, the people have earnestly and repeatedly appealed to the General Assembly to supply this want, and have at the same time petitioned to be provided with a Book of Devotion, as a great help in the absence of the public Services of the

Church. It is gratifying to know that these appeals are now meeting with attention; several missionaries having been lately sent out, through the indefatigable exertions of Dr Fowler, and the other members of the Colonial Committee. The Committee which has been long in existence for the preparation of a suitable Manual of Devotion, and of which you are now the Convener, will meet with much encouragement from the Synod of Aberdeen, who, on the subject being lately brought before them, unanimously agreed to overture the General Assembly, "to prosecute with all diligence and earnestness this interesting and very important work."

Our late experience in the Crimean campaign, particularly in the early part of it, serves to prove, in a painful manner, how destitute our gallant and pious soldiers and sailors were in this respect. A letter from one of them shows how deeply it was felt. He writes in March 1855: "Since I landed in Turkey, I have not heard the Word of God preached, with the exception of hearing the Church of England prayers read twice. How many of Scotland's sons have gone down to the narrow grave, and no minister to read a verse, or utter a word of prayer!" Had we possessed such a manual as this proposed, as a household book, would it not have prevented, in a great measure, this ground of complaint?

At home, the want of such a work must in many localities be no less a matter of regret, especially in pastoral and highland districts, where the churches are far separated,—some parishes being forty miles by thirty, and even sixty by thirty in extent, thus rendering it impossible to attend church during the winter season, or even to receive the visit of a minister. In our lowland districts, and in our large towns, it would not be without its use. Families and individuals, prevented from attending church, would find it a great comfort. In many of our large institutions, such as infirmaries and factories, it would confer a great benefit, and would prove a material help to missionaries and Scripture readers, supplying their absence in many cases.

All classes of our people, from the want of such a volume, have no alternative but to make use of the English Prayer-Book; and although there is no doubt that, from getting

accustomed to its use, many, particularly the young, are led to join the Episcopal Church, still we may be thankful that there is such a book to have recourse to.—"A book in which the prayers and thanksgivings of millions in either hemisphere, as well as the worship of a thousand floating sanctuaries on the seas between, find language every Sabbath day." Is it not to be desired that the same beautiful reflection should be equally applicable to our own Church?

Whilst such a work would be of great use in affording the means of public worship, as well as of promoting private devotion, it would also be a convenient medium for keeping correct views of the doctrines and forms of the Church before the people, particularly on Baptism and the Lord's Supper. This is certainly very necessary in these times, when Romanism and Puseyism are making such strides. The idea of Baptism with many, is very low and erroneous, being often looked upon as little more than giving the child a name. Clear and intelligent views of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper are certainly of great importance. There are also very unscriptural views on the reading of the Bible as an essential part of the Public Service of the Church, many considering the reading of the Scriptures in a great measure superfluous;—therefore, such expressions regarding this essential part of the service, as these, "the reading of the Bible is a mere waste of time; we can read our Bibles at home," are by no means uncommon. Such expressions are certainly to be deplored, as they not only convey a very mistaken idea of public worship, but strike at the root of it altogether. For, may it not be said with equal justice, there is no need of a sermon, there is no need of praise, there is no need of prayer, we can do all at home? If we attach so little importance to what God speaks to us in His Word, how can we expect that He should listen to us when we present our petitions to Him?

"In hearing of the Word, men usually look too much upon men, and forget from what spring the Word hath its power; they observe too narrowly the different hand of the sowers, and too little depend on His hand, who is Lord of both seed-time and harvest."

This very important part of the service had fallen so much into disuse, although a considerable portion of the Scriptures is enjoined by the Directory to be read regularly and systematically, and without note or comment, at each diet, that the last General Assembly found it necessary to issue a recommendation to ministers to attend to this injunction of the Directory. The reading of a considerable portion of the Scriptures in a regular and systematic way, enters into the service of all the Churches of the Reformation, and seems only to have fallen into comparative disuse in our Church, and those springing out of it. When so little value is attached to the reading of the Scriptures in public, is it not to be feared that it may lead to the neglect of the duty in private?

I cannot omit mentioning the importance set upon this essential part of the service by a late pious lady, who says, that it was almost as necessary for a minister to be as good a reader as a preacher. Whilst the Assembly have found it necessary to rectify this grievous neglect, the people have commenced the improvement of another essential part of the service, the importance of which had been very much lost sight of—viz., the Psalmody. Now that Music is so universally cultivated, why should not the highest department of it, Sacred Music, receive its due share of attention? Our Pagan forefathers were prepared by its influence for the reception of the truth; and an old divine says, "Music hath power to express and represent to the mind, more inwardly than any other sensible means, the turns and varieties of all passions; it filleth the mind with comfort and heavenly delight, and stirreth up desires and affections corresponding to the holy words uttered. It is a thing whereunto God's people of old did resort, that thereby especially their souls might be edified."

I have ventured to mention in the Syllabus annexed, that the prayers should be short, simple, and well arranged, according to the natural order of prayer, as, by being so, they would not be fatiguing, could be more easily followed, and so more likely to be edifying. As bearing upon this point, I was glad to see the remarks of the Rev. Dr Crombie, at a

late meeting of the Presbytery of Perth, when, on the attention of the Presbytery being called to the Act of the last General Assembly on the Public Reading of the Scriptures, by the Rev. Mr Cumming, and which Act received the support of the Presbytery, the Rev. Doctor says :—" He could not help observing that their prayers should not extend beyond ten minutes; the bodies and minds of the people were often worn out before they were concluded." Similar remarks might, in my opinion, be extended to the length of sermons in general, which are often so long as to defeat, by the weariness they induce, the object in view.

In a Service where all the parts are essential, it is surely of importance that they should be fairly balanced, and that each should have its due share of attention.

In making the above remarks, I need scarcely say that I have been actuated solely with the view of promoting the usefulness of our Church, by providing for the wants of her people. The volume proposed, by becoming a household book, would prevent the continual desertion of her children, by strengthening their affections towards her,—whilst it would carry comfort to the hearts, and relieve the longings of many of her sons in distant lands, far removed from her ministrations.

In presuming to make a suggestion as to what the Manual of Devotion should contain, I do so with the greatest deference to the reverend fathers and members of our Church, so much better fitted than I am to prepare this Manual; but I have considered what might have been my own wants, if placed in the position of those for whom the Manual is intended, and arranged its contents accordingly. I state my own views, however, more in hopes that they may call forth abler opinions from others, than with any expectation that mine will be to any considerable extent adopted.

I am,

REVEREND SIR,

Your most obedient Servant,

JOHN SMITH.

EDINBURGH, 20 CHARLOTTE SQUARE.

SYLLABUS

OF

A MANUAL OF DEVOTION

PREPARED FOR

THE USE OF MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

I.—The Order of Public Worship.

II.—Various Short, Simple, and Well-arranged Prayers for the Public Service.

III.—Prayers adapted to Times of Humiliation; as, during the late war; pestilence, and other times of trial and danger.

IV.—Thanksgivings.

V.—The Order of Baptism, with an explanation of the Doctrine.

VI.—The Order and Administration of the Lord's Supper, with an Explanation of the Doctrine.

VII.—Prayers and Meditations adapted to the Season of Communion.

VIII.—The Visitation of the Sick, with Services for the various stages of sickness, containing Prayers, suitable Psalms, and other portions of Scripture, to be read to or by the sick.

IX.—Various forms of Prayer for relatives and friends, with portions of Scripture suitable to the time of death and burial.

X.—The Ordination of Ministers and Elders.

XI.—The Order of Marriage.

XII.—The Thirty-three Articles of the Confession of Faith.

XIII.—Shorter Catechism, Lord's Prayer, and Creed.

XIV.—Psalms, Paraphrases, and Hymns.

XV.—Short Morning and Evening Prayers, for a fortnight, made to suit Families or Individuals.

XVI.—Short Prayers for particular trials and occasions.

XVII.—One or two forms of Grace before and after meat.

XVIII.—Prayer before and after Public Worship.

XIX.—A Table of Select Portions of Scripture, for Daily Reading.

XX.—Reasons for the faith that is in us.

XXI.—What Presbyterianism is; with a short account of the early history of our Church. This might be contained in the Preface.

COLSTON AND SON, PRINTERS, 80 ROSE STREET, EDINBURGH.

PART II.

FEW words are required, previously to bringing before those of the public who are interested in this important topic, "The Directory for the Public Worship of God, agreed upon by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, with the assistance of Commissioners from the Church of Scotland, as a part of the Covenanted Uniformity in Religion betwixt the Churches of Christ in the Kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland."

No historical account is here needed of the famous Assembly that met in Henry VII.'s Chapel within Westminster Abbey. The political atmosphere had been in a state of commotion; and the contest for emancipation from what was viewed as religious thraldom, was going on. The mind of England was stirred. Not merely, however, was political freedom demanded,—not only must despotism be resisted, but what was accounted to be a purer and more Scriptural mode of worship be adopted. Then had the spectacle been presented of a nation joining in "solemn league and covenant" with the Lord of Hosts. Religious questions were, at that period, the most stirring questions. Not a few who espoused the Parliamentary cause, were not only lovers of freedom, but lovers also of God. They realised His presence and sought His favour; and when, after fulfiling their mission, the men of that time were no more found,—when the nation rushed afterwards from what was called "Puritanism" into excess of riot and vice; when, for Cromwell's sway, there was substituted the impure abandonment of the reign of Charles II.; at

the time when Milton was well nigh proscribed, and Richard Baxter silenced, it might be truly said that the people had gone from one extreme to the other. We must not, however, judge of the Puritans and Commonwealth men by the caricatures of adversaries. They were beings noble of heart, if stern of purpose. They might quote from the Old Testament rather than from the New. But that the love of Christ was burning in many of their hearts, admits not of dispute. Saintly men there were, indeed, who sympathised not with them. We cannot but think of Sanderson, the wise and good; of Jeremy Taylor, the Chrysostom of English preachers; and of many others, without being reminded of the fact that the followers of Jesus hàve diversities of outward garb. But that the stronger pulse of inward piety beat in the hearts of those to whom even individuals, such as we have specified, were ranged upon the opposite side, will now be acknowledged even by secular historians. They took umbrage at the English Liturgy. There were in it particulars which wounded their souls and vexed their consciences. Some rags of Romish superstition they conceived still to be lingering under the vesture of the officiating minister. They disapproved of candles on the communion table, of bowing at the name of Jesus, and of other practices to which Laud and his adherents gave their countenance.

They disapproved of the Liturgy, but they did not therefore conceive that no guide was necessary for the conducting of the public devotions of the sanctuary. They complained of the Liturgy of the Church of England, that "Papists" boasted of the book as "a compliance with them, in a great part, of their service, and so were not a little confirmed in their superstition and idolatry,"—a charge to which, except in certain parts, the Common Prayer Book of the Church of England cannot be considered as obnoxious. They also assigned, in the preface to the Directory, a second reason, viz. that the Liturgy had been "a great means" of increasing an "idle and unedifying ministry," contenting itself with "set forms made to their hands by others, without putting forth themselves to

exercise the gift of prayer, with which our Lord Jesus Christ pleaseth to furnish all His servants whom He calls to that service;" as also, "a matter of endless strife and contention in the Church, and a snare to many godly and faithful ministers who have been persecuted and silenced on that occasion," &c.

While thus, however, renouncing the Church of England Liturgy, the Westminster Assembly,—to whose labours we own the Catechisms, Longer and Shorter, the best text-book of theology we yet possess—every clause and sentence of which was thoroughly debated and maturely considered,—thought it right to issue the documents which follow these remarks, in accordance with "an order received from both Houses of Parliament," desiring them to turn their attention to the important topics of discipline, and of a "Directory of Worship and Government." This resolution of the two Houses was communicated to the Assembly on 12th October 1643; and that it was meant to be an authoritative document,—and intended to be the model of public devotion, is evident from the terms used in reference to it: "THE DIRECTORY OF WORSHIP, OR LITURGY, HEREAFTER TO BE USED IN THE CHURCH." We need only add that by an Act of the General Assembly, held in Edinburgh in 1645, this Directory was approved of. It was ratified, in the same year, by Act of Parliament.

"Assembly at EDINBURGH, February 3, 1645. Sess. 10.

"Act of the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, for the establishing and putting in Execution of the Directory for the Publick Worship of God.

"WHEREAS an happy unity, and uniformity in religion amongst the kirks of Christ, in these three kingdoms, united under one Sovereign, having been long and earnestly wished for by the godly and well-affected amongst us, was propounded as a main article of the large treaty, without which band and bulwark, no safe, well-grounded, and lasting peace could be expected; and afterward, with greater strength and maturity, revived in the Solemn League and Covenant of the three kingdoms; whereby they stand straightly obliged to endeavour the nearest uniformity in one form of Church-government, Directory of Worship, Confession of Faith, and Form of Catechising; which hath also before, and since our entering into that Covenant, been the matter of many supplications and remonstrances, and sending Commis-

sioners to the King's Majesty; of declarations to the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, and of letters to the Reverend Assembly of Divines, and others of the ministry of the kirk of England; being also the end of our sending Commissioners, as was desired, from this kirk, with commission to treat of uniformity in the four particulars afore-mentioned, with such committees as should be appointed by both Houses of Parliament of England, and by the Assembly of Divines sitting at Westminster; and beside all this, it being, in point of conscience, the chief motive and end of our adventuring upon manifold and great hazards, for quenching the devouring flame of the present unnatural and bloody war in England, though to the weakening of this kingdom within itself, and the advantage of the enemy which have invaded it; accounting nothing too dear to us, so that this our joy be fulfilled. And now this great work being so far advanced, that a Directory for the Publick Worship of God in all the three kingdoms being agreed upon by the Honourable Houses of the Parliament of England, after consultation with the Divines of both kingdoms there assembled, and sent to us for our approbation, that, being also agreed upon by this kirk and Kingdom of Scotland, it may be in the name of both kingdoms presented to the King, for his royal consent and ratification; the General Assembly, having most seriously considered, revised, and examined the Directory afore-mentioned, after several publick readings of it, after much deliberation, both publickly and in private committees, after full liberty given to all to object against it, and earnest invitations of all who have any scruples about it, to make known the same, that they might be satisfied; doth unanimously, and without a contrary voice, agree to and approve the following Directory, in all the heads thereof, together with the Preface set before it; and doth require, decern, and ordain, That, according to the plain tenor and meaning thereof, and the intent of the Preface, it be carefully and uniformly observed and practised by all the ministers and others within this kingdom whom it doth concern; which practice shall be begun, upon intimation given to the several presbyteries from the Commissioners of this General Assembly, who shall also take special care for timeous printing of this Directory, that a printed copy of it be provided and kept for the use of every kirk in this kingdom; also that each presbytery have a printed copy thereof for their use, and take special notice of the observation or neglect thereof in every congregation within their bounds, and make known the same to the Provincial or General Assembly, as there shall be cause. Provided always, That the clause in the Directory, of the administration of the Lord's Supper, which mentioneth the communicants sitting about the table, or at it, be not interpreted, as if, in the judgment of this kirk, it were indifferent, and free for any of the communicants not to come to, and receive at the table; or as if we did approve the distributing of the elements by the minister to each communicant, and not by the communicants among themselves. It is also provided, That this shall be no prejudice to the order and practice of this kirk, in such particulars as are appointed by the books of discipline, and acts of General Assemblies, and are not otherwise ordered and appointed in the Directory.

Finally, The Assembly doth, with much joy and thankfulness, acknowledge the rich blessing and invaluable mercy of God, in bringing the so much wished-for uniformity in religion to such a happy period, that these kingdoms, once at so great a distance in the form of worship, are now, by the blessing of God, brought to a nearer uniformity than any other reformed kirks; which is unto us the return of our pray-

ers, and a lightening of our eyes, and reviving of our hearts in the midst of our many sorrows and sufferings; a taking away, in a great measure, the reproach of the people of God, to the stopping of the mouths of malignant and disaffected persons; and an opening unto us a door of hope, that God hath yet thoughts of peace towards us, and not of evil, to give us an expected end; in the expectation and confidence whereof we do rejoice; beseeching the Lord to preserve these kingdoms from heresies, schisms, offences, profaneness, and whatsoever is contrary to sound doctrine, and the power of godliness; and to continue with us, and the generations following, these His pure and purged ordinances, together with an increase of the power and life thereof, to the glory of His great name, the enlargement of the kingdom of His Son, the corroboration of peace and love between the kingdoms, the unity and comfort of all His people, and our edifying one another in love.

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THE DIRECTORY

FOR THE

PUBLICK WORSHIP OF GOD.

THE PREFACE.

"In the beginning of the blessed Reformation, our wise and pious ancestors took care to set forth an order for redress of many things, which they then, by the word, discovered to be vain, erroneous, superstitious, and idolatrous in the publick worship of God. This occasioned many godly and learned men to rejoice much in the Book of Common Prayer, at that time set forth; because the mass, and the rest of the Latin service being removed, the publick worship was celebrated in our own tongue: many of the common people also received benefit by hearing the scriptures read in their own language, which formerly were unto them as a book that is sealed.

Howbeit, long and sad experience hath made it manifest, that the Liturgy used in the Church of England (notwithstanding all the pains and religious intentions of the Compilers of it) hath proved an offence, not only to many of the godly at home, but also to the Reformed Churches abroad. For, not to speak of urging the reading of all the prayers, which very greatly increased the burden of it, the many unprofitable and burdensome ceremonies contained in it have occasioned much mischief, as well by disquieting the consciences of many godly ministers and people who could not yield unto them, as by depriving them of the ordinances of God which they might not enjoy without conforming or subscribing to those ceremonies. Sundry good Christians have been, by means thereof, kept from the Lord's table; and divers able and faithful ministers debarred from the exercise of their ministry (to the endangering of many thousand souls, in a time of such scarcity of faithful pastors), and spoiled of their livelihood, to the undoing of them and their families. Prelates, and their faction, have laboured to raise the estimation of it to such a height, as if there were no other worship, or way of worship of God, amongst us, but only the Service-Book; to the great hindrance of the preaching of the word, and (in some places, especially of late) to the justling of it out as unnecessary, or at best, as far inferior to the reading of common prayer; which was made no better than an idol by many ignorant and superstitious people, who, pleasing themselves, in their presence at that service, and their lip-labour in bearing a part in it, have thereby hardened themselves in their ignorance and carelessness of saving knowledge and true piety.

In the meantime, Papists boasted that the book was a compliance with them in a great part of their service; and so were not a little confirmed in their superstition and idolatry, expecting rather our return to them, than endeavouring the reformation of themselves: in which expectation they were of late very much encouraged, when, upon the pretended warrantableness of imposing of the former ceremonies, new ones were daily obtruded upon the Church.

Add hereunto (which was not foreseen, but since hath come to pass), that the Liturgy hath been a great means, as on the one hand to make and increase an idle and unedifying ministry, which contented itself with set forms made to their hands by others, without putting forth themselves to exercise the gift of prayer, with which our Lord Jesus Christ pleaseth to furnish all his servants whom he calls to that office: so, on the other side, it hath been (and ever would be, if continued) a matter of endless strife and contention in the Church, and a snare both to many godly and faithful ministers, who have been persecuted and silenced upon that occasion, and to others of hopeful parts, many of which have been, and more still would be, diverted from all thoughts of the ministry to other studies; especially in these latter times, wherein God vouchsafeth to his people more and better means for the discovery of error and superstition, and for attaining of knowledge in the mysteries of godliness, and gifts in preaching and prayer.

Upon these, and many the like weighty considerations in reference to the whole book in general, and because of divers particulars contained in it; not from any love to novelty, or intention to disparage our first reformers (of whom we are persuaded, that, were they now alive, they would join with us in this work, and whom we acknowledge as excellent instruments, raised by God, to begin the purging and building of His house, and desire they may be had of us and posterity in everlasting remembrance, with thankfulness and honour), but that we may in some measure

answer the gracious providence of God, which at this time calleth upon us for further reformation, and may satisfy our own consciences, and answer the expectation of other reformed churches, and the desires of many of the godly among ourselves, and withal give some publick testimony of our endeavours for uniformity in divine worship, which we have promised in our Solemn League and Covenant; we have, after earnest and frequent calling upon the name of God, and after much consultation, not with flesh and blood, but with his holy word, resolved to lay aside the former Liturgy, with the many rites and ceremonies formerly used in the worship of God; and have agreed upon this following Directory for all the parts of publick worship, at ordinary and extraordinary times.

Wherein our care hath been to hold forth such things as are of divine institution in every ordinance; and other things we have endeavoured to set forth according to the rules of Christian prudence, agreeable to the general rules of the word of God; our meaning therein being only, that the general heads, the sense and scope of the prayers, and other parts of publick worship, being known to all, there may be a consent of all the churches in those things that contain the substance of the service and worship of God; and the ministers may be hereby directed, in their administrations, to keep like soundness in doctrine and prayer, and may, if need be, have some help and furniture, and yet so as they become not hereby slothful and negligent, in stirring up the gifts of Christ in them; but that each one, by meditation, by taking heed to himself, and the flock of God committed to him, and by wise observing the ways of divine providence, and may be careful to furnish his heart and tongue with further or other materials of prayer and exhortation, as shall be needful upon all occasions."

The following directions are given as to the commencement of worship, that all things may be done "decently and in order:"—

Of the Assembling of the Congregation, and their Behaviour in the Publick Worship of God.

"When the congregation is to meet for publick worship, the people (having prepared their hearts thereunto) ought all to come and join therein; not absenting themselves from the publick ordinances through negligence, or upon pretence of private meetings.

Let all enter the assembly, not irreverently, but in a grave and seemly manner, taking their seats or places without adoration, or bowing themselves towards one place or other.

The congregation being assembled, the minister, after solemn calling on them to the worshipping of the great name of God, is to begin with prayer.

"In all reverence and humility acknowledging the incomprehensible greatness "and majesty of the Lord (in whose presence they do then in a special manner ap- "pear), and their own vileness and unworthiness to approach so near Him, with "their utter inability of themselves to so great a work; and humbly beseeching "Him for pardon, assistance, and acceptance, in the whole service then to be per-

"formed; and for a blessing on that particular portion of his word then to be read: "And all in the name and mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ."

The publick worship being begun, the people are wholly to attend upon it, forbearing to read any thing, except what the minister is then reading or citing; and abstaining much more from all private whisperings, conferences, salutations, or doing reverence to any person present or coming in; as also from all gazing, sleeping, and other indecent behaviour, which may disturb the minister or people, or hinder themselves or others in the service of God.

If any, through necessity, be hindered from being present at the beginning, they ought not, when they come into the congregation, to betake themselves to their private devotions, but reverently to compose themselves to join with the assembly in that ordinance of God which is then in hand.

Ample provision is made for the reading, in due course, of the sacred oracles:—

Of Publick Reading of the Holy Scriptures.

"READING of the word in the congregation, being part of the publick worship of God (wherein we acknowledge our dependence upon him, and subjection to him), and one mean sanctified by him for the edifying of his people, is to be performed by the pastors and teachers.

Howbeit, such as intend the ministry, may occasionally both read the word, and exercise their gift in preaching in the congregation, if allowed by the presbytery thereunto.

All the canonical books of the Old and New Testament (but none of those which are commonly called *Apocrypha*) shall be publickly read in the vulgar tongue, out of the best allowed translation, distinctly, that all may hear and understand.

How large a portion shall be read at once, is left to the wisdom of the minister; but it is convenient, that ordinarily one chapter of each Testament be read at every meeting; and sometimes more, where the chapters be short, or the coherence of matter requireth it.

It is requisite that all the canonical books be read over in order, that the people may be better acquainted with the whole body of the scriptures; and ordinarily, where the reading in either Testament endeth on one Lord's day, it is to begin the next.

We commend also the more frequent reading of such scriptures as he that readeth shall think best for the edification of his hearers, as the book of Psalms, and such like.

When the minister who readeth shall judge it necessary to expound any part of what is read, let it not be done until the whole chapter or psalm be ended; and regard is always to be had unto the time, that neither preaching, nor other ordinances be straitened, or rendered tedious. Which rule is to be observed in all other publick performances.

Beside publick reading of the holy scriptures, every person that can read, is to be exhorted to read the scriptures privately (and all others that cannot read, if not disabled by age, or otherwise, are likewise to be exhorted to learn to read), and to have a Bible.

The sermon was intended to be preceded by a second prayer:—

Of Public Prayer before the Sermon.

"After reading of the word, (and singing of the psalm), the minister who is to preach, is to endeavour to get his own and his hearers' hearts to be rightly affected with their sins, that they may all mourn in sense thereof before the Lord, and hunger and thirst after the grace of God in Jesus Christ, by proceeding to a more full confession of sin, with shame and holy confusion of face, and to call upon the Lord to this effect:

"To acknowledge our great sinfulness, First, by reason of original sin, which "(beside the guilt that makes us liable to everlasting damnation) is the seed of all "other sins, hath depraved and poisoned all the faculties and powers of soul and "body, doth defile our best actions, and (were it not restrained, or our hearts re-"newed by grace) would break forth into innumerable transgressions, and greatest "rebellions against the Lord that ever were committed by the vilest of the sons of "men. And next, by reason of actual sins, our own sins, the sins of magistrates, "of ministers, and of the whole nation, unto which we are many ways accessory: "which sins of ours receive many fearful aggravations, we having broken all the "commandments of the holy, just, and good law of God, doing that which is for-"bidden, and leaving undone what is enjoined; and that not only out of ignorance "and infirmity, but also more presumptuously, against the light of our minds, checks "of our consciences, and motions of his own Holy Spirit to the contrary, so that we "have no cloak for our sins; yea, not only despising the riches of God's goodness, "forbearance, and long-suffering, but standing out against many invitations and of-"fers of grace in the gospel; not endeavouring, as we ought, to receive Christ into "our hearts by faith, or to walk worthy of him in our lives.

"To bewail our blindness of mind, hardness of heart, unbelief, impenitency, "security, lukewarmness, barrenness; our not endeavouring after mortification "and newness of life, nor after the exercise of godliness in the power thereof; and "that the best of us have not so steadfastly walked with God, kept our garments so "unspotted, nor been so zealous of his glory, and the good of others, as we ought: "and to mourn over such other sins as the congregation is particularly guilty of, "notwithstanding the manifold and great mercies of our God, the love of Christ, "the light of the gospel, and reformation of religion, our own purposes, promises, "vows, solemn covenant, and other special obligations, to the contrary.

"To acknowledge and confess, that, as we are convinced of our guilt, so, out of "a deep sense thereof, we judge ourselves unworthy of the smallest benefits, most "worthy of God's fiercest wrath, and of all the curses of the law, and heaviest "judgments inflicted upon the most rebellious sinners; and that he might most "justly take his kingdom and gospel from us, plague us with all sorts of spiritual "and temporal judgments in this life, and after cast us into utter darkness, in the "lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, where is weeping and gnashing of "teeth for evermore.

"Notwithstanding all which, to draw near to the throne of grace, encouraging "ourselves with hope of a gracious answer of our prayers, in the riches and all "sufficiency of that only one oblation, the satisfaction and intercession of the Lord "Jesus Christ, at the right hand of his Father and our Father; and in confidence

" of the exceeding great and precious promises of mercy and grace in the new " covenant, through the same Mediator thereof, to deprecate the heavy wrath and " curse of God, which we are not able to avoid, or bear; and humbly and earnestly " to supplicate for mercy, in the free and full remission of all our sins, and that " only for the bitter sufferings and precious merits of that our only Saviour Jesus " Christ.

" That the Lord would vouchsafe to shed abroad His love in our hearts by the " Holy Ghost; seal unto us, by the same Spirit of adoption, the full assurance of " our pardon and reconciliation; comfort all that mourn in Zion, speak peace to the " wounded and troubled spirit, and bind up the broken-hearted; and as for secure " and presumptuous sinners, that he would open their eyes, convince their con- " sciences, and turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan " unto God, that they also may receive forgiveness of sin, and an inheritance among " them that are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus.

" With remission of sins through the blood of Christ, to pray for sanctification " by his Spirit; the mortification of sin dwelling in and many times tyrannizing " over us; the quickening of our dead spirits with the life of God in Christ; grace " to fit and enable us for all duties of conversation and callings towards God and " men; strength against temptations; the sanctified use of blessings and crosses; " and perseverance in faith and obedience unto the end.

" To pray for the propagation of the gospel and kingdom of Christ to all nations; " for the conversion of the Jews, the fulness of the Gentiles, the fall of Antichrist, " and the hastening of the second coming of our Lord; for the deliverance of the " distressed churches abroad from the tyranny of the antichristian faction, and " from the cruel oppressions and blasphemies of the Turk; for the blessing of God " upon the reformed churches, especially upon the churches and kingdoms of " Scotland, England, and Ireland, now more strictly and religiously united in the " Solemn National League and Covenant; and for our plantations in the remote " parts of the world: more particularly for that church and kingdom whereof we " are members, that therein God would establish peace and truth, the purity of all " his ordinances, and the power of godliness; prevent and remove heresy, schism, " profaneness, superstition, security, and unfruitfulness under the means of grace; " heal all our rents and divisions, and preserve us from breach of our Solemn " Covenant.

" To pray for all in authority, especially for the King's Majesty; that God " would make him rich in blessings, both in his person and government; establish " his throne in religion and righteousness, save him from evil counsel, and make " him a blessed and glorious instrument for the conservation and propagation of the " gospel, for the encouragement and protection of them that do well, the terror of " all that do evil, and the great good of the whole church, and of all his kingdoms; " for the conversion of the Queen, the religious education of the Prince, and the " rest of the royal seed; for the comforting the afflicted Queen of Bohemia, sister " to our sovereign; and for the restitution and establishment of the illustrious " Prince Charles, Elector Palatine of the Rhine, to all his dominions and dignities; " for a blessing upon the High Court of Parliament (when sitting in any of these " kingdoms respectively), the nobility, the subordinate judges and magistrates, the " gentry, and all the commonality; for all pastors and teachers, that God would fill " them with his Spirit, make them exemplarily holy, sober, just, peaceable, and

" gracious in their lives; sound, faithful, and powerful in their ministry; and fol-
" low all their labours with abundance of success and blessing; and give unto all
" his people pastors according to his own heart; for the universities, and all schools
" and religious seminaries of church and commonwealth, that they may flourish
" more and more in learning and piety; for the particular city or congregation,
" that God would pour out a blessing upon the ministry of the word, sacraments,
" and discipline, upon the civil government, and all the several families and persons
" therein; for mercy to the afflicted under any inward or outward distress; for
" seasonable weather, and fruitful seasons, as the time may require; for averting the
" judgments that we either feel or fear, or are liable unto, as famine, pestilence, the
" sword, and such like.

" And, with confidence of his mercy to his whole church, and the acceptance of
" our persons, through the merits and mediation of our High Priest, the Lord Jesus,
" to profess that it is the desire of our souls to have fellowship with God in the
" reverend and conscionable use of his holy ordinances; and, to that purpose, to
" pray earnestly for his grace and effectual assistance to the sanctification of his holy
" sabbath, the Lord's day, in all the duties thereof, publick and private, both to our-
" selves, and to all other congregations of his people, according to the riches and ex-
" cellency of the gospel, this day celebrated and enjoyed.

" And because we have been unprofitable hearers in times past, and now cannot
" of ourselves receive, as we should, the deep things of God, the mysteries of Jesus
" Christ, which require a spiritual discerning; to pray, that the Lord, who teacheth
" to profit, would graciously please to pour out the Spirit of grace, together with
" the outward means thereof, causing us to attain such a measure of the excellency
" of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, and, in him, of the things which belong
" to our peace, that we may account all things but as dross in comparison of him;
" and that we, tasting the first-fruits of the glory that is to be revealed, may long
" for a more full and perfect communion with him, that where he is, we may be
" also, and enjoy the fulness of those joys and pleasures which are at his right hand
" for evermore.

" More particularly, that God would in a special manner furnish his servant (now
" called to dispense the bread of life unto his household) with wisdom, fidelity, zeal,
" and utterance, that he may divide the word of God aright, to every one his portion,
" in evidence and demonstration of the Spirit and power; and that the Lord would
" circumcise the ears and hearts of the hearers, to hear, love, and receive with meek-
" ness the ingrafted word, which is able to save their souls; make them as good
" ground to receive in the good seed of the word, and strengthen them against the
" temptations of Satan, the cares of the world, the hardness of their own hearts, and
" whatsoever else may hinder their profitable and saving hearing; that so Christ
" may be so formed in them, and live in them, that all their thoughts may be brought
" into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and their hearts established in every
" good word and work for ever."

We judge this to be a convenient order, in the ordinary publick prayer; yet so, as the minister may defer (as in prudence he shall think meet) some part of these petitions till after his sermon, or offer up to God some of the thanksgivings hereafter appointed, in his prayer before his sermon.

The directions given as to preaching are weighty and instructive:—

Of the Preaching of the Word.

Preaching of the Word, being the power of God unto salvation, and one of the greatest and most excellent works belonging to the ministry of the gospel, should be so performed, that the workman need not be ashamed, but may save himself, and those that hear him.

It is presupposed (according to the rules for ordination) that the minister of Christ is in some good measure gifted for so weighty a service, by his skill in the original languages, and in such arts and sciences as are handmaid unto divinity; by his knowledge in the whole body of theology, but most of all in the holy scriptures having his senses and heart exercised in them above the common sort of believers; and by the illumination of God's Spirit, and other gifts of edification, which (together with reading and studying of the word) he ought still to seek by prayer, and an humble heart, resolving to admit and receive any truth not yet attained, whenever God shall make it known unto him. All which he is to make use of, and improve, in his private preparations, before he deliver in publick what he hath provided.

Ordinarily, the subject of his sermon is to be some text of scripture, holding forth some principle or head of religion, or suitable to some special occasion emergent; or he may go on in some chapter, psalm, or book of the holy scripture, as he shall see fit.

Let the introduction to his text be brief and perspicuous, drawn from the text itself, or context, or some parallel place, or general sentence of scripture.

If the text be long (as in histories or parables it sometimes must be), let him give a brief sum of it; if short, a paraphrase thereof, if need be: in both, looking diligently to the scope of the text, and pointing at the chief heads and grounds of doctrine which he is to raise from it.

In analysing and dividing his text, he is to regard more the order of matter than of words; and neither to burden the memory of the hearers in the beginning with too many members of division, nor to trouble their minds with obscure terms of art.

In raising doctrines from the text, his care ought to be, *First*, That the matter be the truth of God. *Secondly*, That it be a truth contained in or grounded on that text, that the hearers may discern how God teacheth it from thence. *Thirdly*, That he chiefly insist upon those doctrines which are principally intended, and make most for the edification of the hearers.

The doctrine is to be expressed in plain terms; or, if any thing in it need explication, it is to be opened, and the consequence also from the text cleared. The parallel places of scripture, confirming the doctrine, are rather to be plain and pertinent, than many, and (if need be) somewhat insisted upon, and applied to the purpose in hand.

The arguments or reasons are to be solid, and, as much as may be, convincing. The illustrations, of what kind soever, ought to be full of light, and such as may convey the truth into the hearer's heart with spiritual delight.

If any doubt obvious from scripture, reason, or prejudice of the hearers, seem to arise, it is very requisite to remove it, by reconciling the seeming differences, answering the reasons, and discovering and taking away the causes of prejudice and

mistake. Otherwise it is not fit to detain the hearers with propounding or answering vain or wicked cavils, which, as they are endless, so the propounding and answering of them doth more hinder than promote edification.

He is not to rest in general doctrine, although never so much cleared and confirmed, but to bring it home to special use, by application to his hearers: which albeit it prove a work of great difficulty to himself, requiring much prudence, zeal, and meditation, and to the natural and corrupt man will be very unpleasant; yet he is to endeavour to perform it in such a manner, that his auditors may feel the word of God to be quick and powerful, and a decerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and that if any unbeliever or ignorant person be present, he may have the secrets of his heart made manifest, and give glory to God.

In the use of instruction or information in the knowledge of some truth, which is a consequence from his doctrine, he may (when convenient) confirm it by a few firm arguments from the text in hand, and other places of scripture, or from the nature of that common place in divinity, whereof that truth is a branch.

In confutation of false doctrines, he is neither to raise an old heresy from the grave, nor to mention a blasphemous opinion unnecessarily: but, if the people be in danger of an error, he is to confute it soundly, and endeavour to satisfy their judgments and consciences against all objections.

In exhorting to duties, he is, as he seeth cause, to teach also the means that help to the performance of them.

In dehortation, reprehension, and publick admonition (which require special wisdom), let him, as there shall be cause, not only discover the nature and greatness of the sin, with the misery attending it, but also show the danger his hearers are in to be overtaken and surprised by it, together with the remedies and best way to avoid it.

In applying comfort, whether general against all temptations, or particular against some special troubles or terrors, he is carefully to answer such objections as a troubled heart and afflicted spirit may suggest to the contrary.

It is also sometimes requisite to give some notes of trial (which is very profitable, especially when performed by able and experienced ministers, with circumspection and prudence, and the signs clearly grounded on the holy scripture), whereby the hearers may be able to examine themselves whether they have attained those graces, and performed those duties, to which he exhorteth, or be guilty of the sin reprehended, and in danger of the judgments threatened, or are such to whom the consolations propounded do belong; that accordingly they may be quickened and excited to duty, humbled for their wants and sins, affected with their danger, and strengthened with comfort, as their condition, upon examination, shall require.

And, as he needeth not always to prosecute every doctrine which lies in his text, so is he wisely to make choice of such uses, as, by his residence and conversing with his flock, he findeth most needful and seasonable; and, amongst these, such as may most draw their souls to Christ, the fountain of light, holiness, and comfort.

This method is not prescribed as necessary for every man, or upon every text; but only recommended, as being found by experience to be very much blessed of God, and very helpful for the people's understandings and memories.

But the servant of Christ, whatever his method be, is to perform his whole ministry:—

1. Painfully, not doing the work of the Lord negligently.

2. Plainly, that the meanest may understand; delivering the truth not in the en-

ticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect; abstaining also from an unprofitable use of unknown tongues, strange phrases, and cadences of sounds and words; sparingly citing sentences of ecclesiastical or other human writers, ancient or modern, be they never so elegant.

3. Faithfully, looking at the honour of Christ, the conversion, edification, and salvation of the people, not at his own gain or glory; keeping nothing back which may promote those holy ends, giving to every one his own portion, and bearing indifferent respect unto all, without neglecting the meanest, or sparing the greatest in their sins.

4. Wisely, framing all his doctrines, exhortations, and especially his reproofs, in such a manner as may be most likely to prevail; showing all due respect to each man's person and place, and not mixing his own passion or bitterness.

5. Gravely, as becometh the word of God; shunning all such gesture, voice, and expressions, as may occasion the corruptions of men to despise him and his ministry.

6. With loving affection, that the people may see all coming from his godly zeal, and hearty desire to do them good. And,

7. As taught of God, and persuaded in his own heart, that all that he teacheth is the truth of Christ; and walking before his flock, as an example to them in it; earnestly, both in private and publick, recommending his labours to the blessing of God, and watchfully looking to himself, and the flock whereof the Lord hath made him overseer: so shall the doctrine of truth be preserved uncorrupt, many souls converted and built up, and himself receive manifold comforts of his labours even in this life, and afterward the crown of glory laid up for him in the world to come.

Where there are more ministers in a congregation than one, and they of different gifts, each may more especially apply himself to doctrine or exhortation, according to the gift wherein he most excelleth, and as they shall agree between themselves.

Of Prayer after Sermon.

The sermon being ended, the minister is "To give thanks for the great love of "God, in sending his Son Jesus Christ unto us; for the communication of his "Holy Spirit; for the light and liberty of the glorious gospel, and the rich and "heavenly blessings revealed therein; as, namely, election, vocation, adoption, jus-"tification, sanctification, and hope of glory; for the admirable goodness of God "in freeing the land from anti-christian darkness and tyranny, and for all other "national deliverances; for the reformation of religion; for the covenant; and for "many temporal blessings.

"To pray for the continuance of the gospel, and all ordinances thereof, in their "purity, power, and liberty: to turn the chief and most useful heads of the sermon "into some few petitions; and to pray that it may abide in the heart, and bring "forth fruit.

"To pray for preparation for death and judgment, and a watching for the coming "of our Lord Jesus Christ: to entreat of God the forgiveness of the iniquities of "our holy things, and the acceptation of our spiritual sacrifice, through the merit "and mediation of our great High Priest and Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ."

And because the prayer which Christ taught his disciples is not only a pattern of prayer, but itself a most comprehensive prayer, we recommend it also to be used in the prayers of the church.

And whereas, at the administration of the sacraments, the holding publick fasts and days of thanksgiving, and other special occasions, which may afford matter of special petitions and thanksgivings, it is requisite to express somewhat in our publick prayers (as at this time it is our duty to pray for a blessing upon the Assembly of Divines, the armies by sea and land, for the defence of the King, Parliament, and Kingdom), every minister is herein to apply himself in his prayer, before or after sermon, to those occasions: but, for the manner, he is left to his liberty as God shall direct and enable him, in piety and wisdom to discharge his duty.

The prayer ended, let a psalm be sung, if with conveniency it may be done. After which (unless some other ordinance of Christ, that concerneth the congregation at that time, be to follow) let the minister dismiss the congregation with a solemn blessing.

Of the Administration of the Sacraments: And first, Of Baptism.

BAPTISM, as it is not unnecessarily to be delayed, so it is not to be administered in any case by any private person, but by a minister of Christ, called to be the steward of the mysteries of God.

Nor is it to be administered in private places, or privately, but in the place of publick worship, and in the face of the congregation, where the people may most conveniently see and hear; and not in the places where fonts, in the time of Popery, were unfitly and superstitiously placed.

The child to be baptized, after notice given to the minister the day before, is to be presented by the father, or (in case of his necessary absence) by some Christian friend in his place, professing his earnest desire that the child may be baptized.

Before baptism, the minister is to use some words of instruction, touching the institution, nature, use, and ends of this sacrament, showing

"That it is instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ: That it is a seal of the covenant "of grace, of our ingrafting into Christ, and of our union with him, of remission of "sins, regeneration, adoption, and life eternal: That the water, in baptism, repre- "senteth and signifieth both the blood of Christ, which taketh away all guilt of sin, "original and actual; and the sanctifying virtue of the Spirit of Christ against the do- "minion of sin, and the corruption of our sinful nature: That baptizing, or sprink- "ling and washing with water, signifieth the cleansing from sin by the blood and for "the merit of Christ, together with the mortification of sin, and rising from sin to new- "ness of life, by virtue of the death and resurrection of Christ: That the promise is "made to believers and their seed; and that the seed and posterity of the faithful, "born within the church, have, by their birth, interest in the covenant, and right to "the seal of it, and to the outward privileges of the church, under the gospel, no "less than the children of Abraham in the time of the Old Testament; the cove- "nant of grace, for substance, being the same; and the grace of God, and the con- "solation of believers, more plentiful than before: That the Son of God admitted "little children into his presence, embracing and blessing them, saying, *For of such* "*is the kingdom of God:* That children, by baptism, are solemnly received into the "bosom of the visible church, distinguished from the world, and them that are with- "out, and united with believers; and that all who are baptized in the name of Christ, "do renounce, and by their baptism are bound to fight against the devil, the world, "and the flesh: That they are Christians, and federally holy before baptism, and

" therefore are they baptized: That the inward grace and virtue of baptism is not " tied to that very moment of time wherein it is administered; and that the fruit " and power thereof reacheth to the whole course of our life; and that outward " baptism is not so necessary, that, through the want thereof, the infant is in dan- " ger of damnation, or the parents guilty, if they do not contemn or neglect the or- " dinance of Christ, when and where it may be had."

In these or the like instructions, the minister is to use his own liberty and godly wisdom, as the ignorance or errors in the doctrine of baptism, and the edification of the people, shall require.

He is also to admonish all that are present,

" To look back to their baptism; to repent of their sins against their covenant " with God, to stir up their faith; to improve and make right use of their baptism, " and of the covenant sealed thereby betwixt God and their souls."

He is to exhort the parent,

" To consider the great mercy of God to him and his child; to bring up the child " in the knowledge of the grounds of the Christian religion, and in the nurture and " admonition of the Lord; and to let him know the danger of God's wrath to him- " self and child, if he be negligent: requiring his solemn promise for the perform- " ance of his duty."

This being done, prayer is also to be joined with the word of institution, for sanctifying the water to this spiritual use; and the minister is to pray to this or the like effect:

" That the Lord, who hath not left us as strangers without the covenant of promise, " but called us to the privileges of his ordinances, would graciously vouchsafe to " sanctify and bless his own ordinance of baptism at this time: That he would join " the inward baptism of his Spirit with the outward baptism of water; make this " baptism to the infant a seal of adoption, remission of sin, regeneration, and eter- " nal life, and all other promises of the covenant of grace: That the child may be " planted into the likeness of the death and resurrection of Christ; and that, the body " of sin being destroyed in him, he may serve God in newness of life all his days."

Then the minister is to demand the name of child; which being told him, he is to say (calling the child by his name,)

I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

As he pronounceth these words, he is to baptize the child with water: which, for the manner of doing of it, is not only lawful but sufficient, and most expedient to be, by pouring or sprinkling of the water on the face of the child, without adding any other ceremony.

This done he is to give thanks and pray, to this or the like purpose:

" Acknowledging with all thankfulness, that the Lord is true and faithful in " keeping covenant and mercy: That he is good and gracious, not only in that he " numbereth us amongst his saints, but is pleased also to bestow upon our children " this singular token and badge of his love in Christ: That, in his truth and spe- " cial providence, he daily bringeth some into the bosom of his church, to be par- " takers of his inestimable benefits, purchased by the blood of his dear Son, for the " continuance and increase of his church.

" And praying, that the Lord would still continue, and daily confirm more and " more this his unspeakable favour: That he would receive the infant now baptized, " and solemnly entered into the household of faith, into his fatherly tuition and

" defence, and remember him with the favour that he showeth to his people; that, " if he shall be taken out of this life in his infancy, the Lord, who is rich in mercy, " would be pleased to receive him up into glory; and if he live, and attain the " years of discretion, that the Lord would so teach him by his word and Spirit, and " make his baptism effectual to him, and so uphold him by his divine power and " grace, that by faith he may prevail against the devil, the world, and the flesh, till " in the end he obtain a full and final victory, and so be kept by the power of God " through faith unto salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The Assembly of Divines evidently intended that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper should be frequently observed.

Of the Celebration of the Communion, or Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

THE communion, or supper of the Lord, is frequently to be celebrated; but how often, may be considered and determined by the ministers, and other church-governors of each congregation, as they shall find most convenient for the comfort and edification of the people committed to their charge. And, when it shall be administered, we judge it convenient to be done after the morning sermon.

The ignorant and the scandalous are not fit to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Where this sacrament cannot with convenience be frequently administered, it is requisite that publick warning be given the sabbath-day before the administration thereof: and that either then, or on some day of that week, something concerning that ordinance, and the due preparation thereunto, and participation thereof, be taught; that, by the diligent use of all means sanctified of God to that end, both in publick and private, all may come better prepared to that heavenly feast.

When the day is come for administration, the minister, having ended his sermon and prayer, shall make a short exhortation:

" Expressing the inestimable benefit we have by this sacrament, together with " the ends and use thereof: setting forth the great necessity of having our comforts " and strength renewed thereby in this our pilgrimage and warfare: how necessary " it is that we come unto it with knowledge, faith, repentance, love, and with " hungering and thirsting souls after Christ and his benefits: how great the danger " to eat and drink unworthily.

" Next, he is, in the name of Christ, on the one part, to warn all such as are " ignorant, scandalous, profane, or that live in any sin or offence against their " knowledge or conscience, that they presume not to come to that holy table; show- " ing them that he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judg- " ment unto himself: and, on the other part, he is in an especial manner to invite " and encourage all that labour under the sense of the burden of their sins, and " fear of wrath, and desire to reach out a greater progress in grace than yet they " can attain unto, to come to the Lord's table; assuring them, in the same name, " of ease, refreshing, and strength to their weak and wearied souls."

After this exhortation, warning, and invitation, the table being before decently covered, and so conveniently placed, that the communicants may orderly sit about it, or at it, the minister is to begin the action with sanctifying and blessing the elements of bread and wine set before him, (the bread in comely and convenient vessels, so prepared, that, being broken by him, and given, it may be distributed amongst the communicants; the wine also in large cups), having first, in a few

words, showed that those elements, otherwise common, are now set apart and sanctified to this holy use, by the word of institution and prayer.

Let the words of institution be read out of the Evangelists, or out of the first Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians, Chap. xi. 23. *I have received of the Lord.* &c. to the 27th Verse, which the minister may, when he seeth requisite, explain and apply.

Let the prayer, thanksgiving, or blessing of the bread and wine, be to this effect:

" With humble and thankful acknowledgment of the greatness of our misery, from " which neither man nor angel was able to deliver us, and of our great unworthiness " of the least of all God's mercies; to give thanks to God for all his benefits, and " especially for that great benefit of our redemption, the love of God the Father, the " sufferings and merits of the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God, by which we are " delivered; and for all means of grace, the word and sacraments; and for this " sacrament in particular, by which Christ, and all his benefits, are applied and " sealed up unto us, which, notwithstanding the denial of them unto others, are in " great mercy continued unto us, after so much and long abuse of them all.

" To profess, that there is no other name under heaven by which we can be " saved, but the name of Jesus Christ, by whom alone we receive liberty and life, " have access to the throne of grace, are admitted to eat and drink at his own " table, and are sealed up by his Spirit to an assurance of happiness and everlast- " ing life.

" Earnestly to pray to God, the Father of all mercies, and God of all consolation, " to vouchsafe his gracious presence, and the effectual working of his Spirit in us; " and so to sanctify these elements both of bread and wine, and to bless his own " ordinance, that we may receive by faith the body and blood of Jesus Christ, cruci- " fied for us, and so to feed upon him, that he may be one with us, and we one " with him; that he may live in us, and we in him, and to him who hath loved us, " and given himself for us."

All which he is to endeavour to perform with suitable affections, answerable to such an holy action, and to stir up the like in the people.

The elements being now sanctified by the word and prayer, the minister, being at the table, is to take the bread in his hand, and say, in these expressions, (or other the like, used by Christ or his apostle upon this occasion:)

" According to the holy institution, command, and example of our blessed Sa- " viour Jesus Christ, I take this bread, and, having given thanks, break it, and give " it unto you; (there the minister, who is also himself to communicate, is to break " the bread, and give it to the communicants;) *Take ye, eat ye; this is the body of* " *Christ which is broken for you: do this in remembrance of him.*"

In like manner the minister is to take the cup, and say, in these expressions, (or other the like, used by Christ or the apostle upon the same occasion:)

" According to the institution, command, and example of our Lord Jesus Christ, " I take this cup, and give it unto you; (here he giveth it to the communicants;) *This cup is the new testament in the blood of Christ, which is shed for the remis-* " *sion of the sins of many: drink ye all of it.*"

After all have communicated, the minister may, in a few words, put them in mind,

" Of the Grace of God in Jesus Christ, held forth in this sacrament; and exhort " them to walk worthy of it."

The minister is to give solemn thanks to God,

"For his rich mercy, and invaluable goodness, vouchsafed to them in that sacra-
"ment; and to entreat for pardon for the defects of the whole service, and for the
"gracious assistance of his good Spirit, whereby they may be enabled to walk in
"the strength of that grace, as becometh those who have received so great pledges
"of salvation."

The collection for the poor is so to be ordered, that no part of the publick worship be thereby hindered.

Of the Sanctification of the Lord's Day.

The Lord's day ought to be so remembered before-hand, as that all wordly business of our ordinary callings may be so ordered, and so timely and seasonably laid aside, as they may not be impediments to the due sanctifying of the day when it comes.

The whole day is to be celebrated as holy to the Lord, both in public and private, as being the Christian Sabbath. To which end, it is requisite, that there be a holy cessation or resting all that day from all unnecessary labours; an abstaining, not only from all sports and pastimes, but also from all worldly words and thoughts.

That the diet on that day be so ordered, as that neither servants be unnecessarily detained from the publick worship of God, nor any other person hindered from the sanctifying that day.

That there be private preparations of every person and family, by prayer for themselves, and for God's assistance of the minister, and for a blessing upon his ministry; and by such other holy exercises, as may further dispose them to a more comfortable communion with God in his publick ordinances.

That all the people meet so timely for publick worship, that the whole congregation may be present at the beginning, and with one heart solemnly join together in all parts of the publick worship, and not depart till after the blessing.

That what time is vacant, between or after the solemn meetings of the congregation in publick, be spent in reading, meditation, repetition of sermons; especially by calling their families to an account of what they have heard, and catechising of them, holy conferences, prayer for a blessing upon the publick ordinances, singing of psalms, visiting the sick, relieving the poor, and such like duties of piety, charity, and mercy, accounting the sabbath a delight.

The Solemnization of Marriage.

Although marriage be no sacrament, nor peculiar to the church of God, but common to mankind, and of publick interest in every commonwealth; yet, because such as marry are to marry in the Lord, and have special need of instruction, direction, and exhortation, from the word of God, at their entering into such a new condition, and of the blessing of God upon them therein, we judge it expedient that marriage be solemnized by a lawful minister of the word, that he may accordingly counsel them, and pray for a blessing upon them.

Marriage is to be betwixt one man and one woman only; and they, such as are not within the degrees of consanguity or affinity prohibited by the word of God; and the parties are to be of years of discretion, fit to make their own choice, or, upon good grounds, to give their mutual consent.

Before the solemnizing of marriage between any persons, their purpose of marriage shall be published by the minister three several sabbath-days, in the congregation, at the place or places of their most usual and constant abode respectively.

And of this publication the minister who is to join them in marriage shall have sufficient testimony, before he proceed to solemnize the marriage.

Before that publication of such their purpose, (if the parties be under age,) the consent of the parents, or others under whose power they are, (in case the parents be dead,) is to be made known to the church officers of that congregation, to be recorded.

The like is to be observed in the proceedings of all others although of age, whose parents are living, for their first marriage.

And, in after marriages of either of those parties, they shall be exhorted not to contract marriage without first acquainting their parents with it, (if with convenience it may be done,) endeavouring to obtain their consent.

Parents ought not to force their children to marry without their free consent, nor deny their own consent without just cause.

After the purpose or contract of marriage hath been thus published, the marriage is not to be long deferred. Therefore the minister, having had convenient warning, and nothing been objected to hinder it, is publickly to solemnize it in the place appointed by authority for public worship, before a competent number of credible witnesses, at some convenient hour of the day, at any time of the year, except on a day of publick humiliation. And we advise that it be not on the Lord's day.

And because all relations are sanctified by the word and prayer, the minister is to pray for a blessing upon them, to this effect:—

"Acknowledging our sins, whereby we have made ourselves less than the least "of all the mercies of God, and provoked him to embitter all our comforts; earnestly, in the name of Christ, to entreat the Lord (whose presence and favour is "the happiness of every condition, and sweetens every relation) to be their portion, "and to own and accept them in Christ, who are now to be joined in the honourable "estate of marriage, the covenant of their God: and that, as he hath brought them "together by His providence, he would sanctify them by His Spirit, giving them a "new frame of heart fit for their new estate; enriching them with all graces where-"by they may perform the duties, enjoy the comforts, undergo the cares, and resist "the temptations which accompany that condition, as becometh Christians."

The prayer being ended, it is convenient that the minister do briefly declare unto them, out of the scripture—

"The institution, use, and ends of marriage, with the conjugal duties, which in "all faithfulness, they are to perform each to other; exhorting them to study the "holy word of God, that they may learn to live by faith, and to be content in the "midst of all marriage cares and troubles, sanctifying God's name, in a thankful, "sober, and holy use of all conjugal comforts; praying much with and for one "another; watching over and provoking each other to love and good works; and "to live together as the heirs of grace and life."

After solemn charging of the persons to be married, before the great God who searcheth all hearts, and to whom they must give a strict account at the last day, and if either of them know any cause, by pre-contract or otherwise, why they may not lawfully proceed to marriage, that they now discover it; the minister (if no impediment be acknowledged) shall cause first the man to take the woman by the right hand, saying these words:

I N. *do take thee* N. *to be my married wife, and do, in the presence of God, and before this congregation, promise and covenant to be a loving and faithful husband unto thee, until God shall separate us by death.*

Then the woman shall take the man by the right hand, and say these words:

I N. *do take thee* N. *to be my married husband, and I do, in the presence of God and before this congregation, promise and covenant to be a loving, faithful, and obedient wife unto thee, until God shall separate us by death.*

Then, without any further ceremony, the minister shall, in the face of the congregation, pronounce them to be husband and wife, according to God's ordinance; and so conclude the action with prayer to this effect:

"That the Lord would be pleased to accompany his own ordinance with his "blessing, beseeching him to enrich the persons now married, as with other pledges "of his love, so particularly with the comforts and fruits of marriage, to the praise "of His abundant mercy, in and through Christ Jesus."

A register is to be carefully kept, wherein the names of the parties so married with the time of their marriage, are forthwith to be fairly recorded in a book, provided for that purpose for the perusal of all whom it may concern.

Concerning Visitation of the Sick.*

It is the duty of the minister not only to teach the people committed to his charge in publick, but privately; and particularly to admonish, exhort, reprove, and comfort them, upon all seasonable occasions, so far as his time, strength, and personal safety will permit.

He is to admonish them, in time of health, to prepare for death; and, for that purpose, they are often to confer with their minister about the estate of their souls; and, in times of sickness, to desire his advice and help, timely and seasonably, before their strength and understanding fail them.

Times of sickness and affliction are special opportunities put into his hand by God to minister a word in season to weary souls: because then the consciences of men are or should be more awakened to bethink themselves of their spiritual estate for eternity; and Satan also takes advantage then to load them more with sore and heavy temptations: therefore, the minister being sent for, and repairing to the sick is to apply himself, with all tenderness and love, to administer some spiritual good to his soul, to this effect.

He may from the consideration of the present sickness, instruct him out of scripture, that diseases come not by chance, or by distempers of body only, but by the wise and orderly guidance of the good hand of God to every particular person smitten by them. And that, whether it be laid upon him out of displeasure for sin, for his correction and amendment, or for trial and exercise of his graces, or for other special and excellent ends, all his sufferings shall turn to his profit, and work together for his good, if he sincerely labour to make a sanctified use of God's visitation, neither despising his chastening, nor waxing weary of his correction.

If he suspect him of ignorance, he shall examine him in the principles of religion, especially touching repentance and faith; and as he seeth cause, instruct him in the nature, use, excellency, and necessity of those graces; as also touching the covenant of grace; and Christ the Son of God, the Mediator of it; and concerning remission of sins by faith in him.

He shall exhort the sick person to examine himself, to search and try his former ways, and his estate towards God.

* The directions given under this head, as generally throughout the Compend, are peculiarly weighty and valuable.

And if the sick person shall declare any scruple, doubt, or temptation that are upon him, instructions and resolutions shall be given to satisfy and settle him.

If it appear that he hath not a due sense of his sins, endeavours ought to be used to convince him of his sins, of the guilt and desert of them; of the filth and pollution which the soul contracts by them; and of the curse of the law and wrath of God, due to them; that he may be truly affected with and humbled for them: and withal make known the danger of deferring repentance, and of neglecting salvation at any time offered; to awaken his conscience, and rouse him up out of a stupid and secure condition, to apprehend the justice and wrath of God, before whom none can stand, but he that, lost in himself, layeth hold upon Christ by faith.

If he hath endeavoured to walk in the ways of holiness, and to serve God in uprightness, although not without many failings and infirmities; or, if his spirit be broken with the sense of sin, or cast down through want of the sense of God's favour; then it will be fit to raise him up, by setting before him the freeness and fulness of God's grace, the sufficiency of righteousness in Christ, the gracious offers in the gospel, that all who repent, and believe with all their heart in God's mercy through Christ, renouncing their own righteousness, shall have life and salvation in him. It may be also useful to show him, that death hath in it no spiritual evil to be feared by those that are in Christ, because sin, the sting of death, is taken away by Christ, who hath delivered all that are his from the bondage of the fear of death, triumphed over the grave, given us victory, is himself entered into glory to prepare a place for his people: so that neither life nor death shall be able to separate them from God's love in Christ, in whom such are sure, though now they must be laid in the dust, to obtain a joyful and glorious resurrection to eternal life.

Advice also may be given, as to beware of an ill-grounded persuasion on mercy or on the goodness of his condition for heaven, so to disclaim all merit in himself, and to cast himself wholly upon God for mercy, in the sole merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, who hath engaged himself never to cast off them who in truth and sincerity come unto him. Care also must be taken, that the sick person be not cast down into despair, by such a severe representation of the wrath of God due to him for his sins, as is not molified by a sensible propounding of Christ and his merit for a door of hope to every penitent believer.

When the sick person is best composed, may be least disturbed, and other necessary offices about him least hindered, the minister, if desired, shall pray with him, and for him, to this effect:

"Confessing and bewailing of sin original and actual; the miserable condition "of all by nature, as being children of wrath, and under the curse; acknowledging "that all diseases, sicknesses, death, and hell itself, are the proper issues and effects "thereof; imploring God's mercy for the sick person, through the blood of Christ; "beseeching that God would open his eyes, discover unto him his sins, cause him "to see himself lost in himself, make known to him the cause why God smiteth "him, reveal Jesus Christ to his soul for righteousness and life, give unto him his "Holy Spirit, to create and strengthen faith to lay hold upon Christ, to work in "him comfortable evidences of his love, to arm him against temptations, to take off "his heart from the world, to sanctify his present visitation, to furnish him with "patience and strength to bear it, and to give him perseverance in faith to the end.

"That, if God shall please to add to his days, he would vouchsafe to bless and "sanctify all means of his recovery; to remove the disease, renew his strength, and

" enable him to walk worthy of God, by a faithful remembrance, and diligent ob-
" serving of such vows and promises of holiness and obedience, as men are apt to make
" in times of sickness, that he may glorify God in the remaining part of his life.

" And, if God have determined to finish his days by the present visitation, he may
" find such evidence of the pardon of all his sins, of his interest in Christ, and eter-
" nal life by Christ, as may cause his inward man to be renewed, while his outward
" man decayeth; that he may behold death without fear, cast himself wholly upon
" Christ without doubting, desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ, and so re-
" ceive the end of his faith, the salvation of his soul, through the only merits and
" intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ, our alone Saviour and all-sufficient Re-
" deemer."

The minister shall admonish him also (as there shall be cause) to set his house in order, thereby to prevent inconveniences; to take care for payment of his debts, and to make restitution or satisfaction where he hath done any wrong; to be reconciled to those with whom he hath been at variance, and fully to forgive all men their trespasses against him, as he expects forgiveness at the hand of God.

Lastly, The minister may improve the present occasion to exhort those about the sick person to consider their own mortality, to return to the Lord, and make peace with him; in health to prepare for sickness, death, and judgment; and all the days of their appointed time so to wait until their change come, that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, they may appear with him in glory.

Concerning Burial of the Dead.

When any person departeth this life, let the dead body, upon the day of burial, be decently attended from the house to the place appointed for publick burial, and there immediately interred, without any ceremony.

And because the custom of kneeling down, and praying by or towards the dead corpse, and other such usages, in the place where it lies before it be carried to burial, are superstitious; and for that praying, reading, and singing, both in going to and at the grave, have been grossly abused, are no way beneficial to the dead, and have proved many ways hurtful to the living; therefore let all such things be laid aside.

Howbeit, we judge it very convenient, that the Christian friends, which accompany the dead body to the place appointed for publick burial, do apply themselves to meditations and conferences suitable to the occasion; and that the minister, as upon other occasions, so at this time, if he be present, may put them in remembrance of their duty.

That this shall not extend to deny any civil respects or deferences at the burial, suitable to the rank and condition of the party deceased, while he was living.

Concerning Publick Solemn Fasting.

When some great and notable judgments are either inflicted upon a people, or apparently imminent, or by some extraordinary provocations notoriously deserved; as also when some special blessing is to be sought and obtained, publick solemn fasting (which is to continue the whole day) is a duty that God expecteth from that nation or people.

A religious fast requires total abstinence, not only from all food (unless bodily

weakness do manifestly disable from holding out till the fast be ended, in which case somewhat may be taken, yet very sparingly, to support nature, when ready to faint), but also from all worldly labour, discourses, and thoughts, and from all bodily delights, and such like (although at other times lawful), rich apparel, ornaments, and such like, during the fast; and much more from whatever is in the nature or use scandalous and offensive, as gaudish attire, lascivious habits and gestures, and other vanities of either sex; which we recommend to all ministers, in their places, diligently and zealously to reprove, as at other times, so especially at a fast, without respect of persons, as there shall be occasion.

Before the publick meeting, each family and person apart are privately to use all religious care to prepare their hearts to such a solemn work, and to be early at the congregation.

So large a portion of the day as conveniently may be, is to be spent in public reading and preaching of the word, with singing of psalms, fit to quicken affections suitable to such a duty: but especially in prayer, to this or the like effect:

"Giving glory to the great Majesty of God, the Creator, Preserver, and supreme "Ruler of all the world, the better to affect us thereby with an holy reverence and "awe of him; acknowledging his manifold, great, and tender mercies, especially to "the church and nation, the more effectually to soften and abase our hearts before "him; humbly confessing of sins of all sorts, with their several aggravations; "justifying God's righteous judgments, as being far less than our sins do deserve; "yet humbly and earnestly imploring his mercy and grace for ourselves, the church "and nation, for our king, and all in authority, and for all others for whom we are "bound to pray (according as the present exigent requireth), with more special "importunity and enlargement than at other times; applying by faith the promises "and goodness of God for pardon, help and deliverance from the evils felt, feared, "or deserved; and for obtaining the blessings which we need and expect; together "with a giving up of ourselves wholly and for ever unto the Lord."

In all these, the ministers, who are the mouths of the people unto God, ought so to speak from their hearts, upon serious and thorough premeditation of them, that both themselves and their people may be much affected, and even melted thereby, especially with sorrow for their sins; that it may be indeed a day of deep humiliation and afflicting of the soul.

Special choice is to be made of such scriptures to be read, and of such texts for preaching, as may best work the hearts of the hearers to the special business of the day, and most dispose them to humiliation and repentance: insisting most on those particulars which each minister's observation and experience tells him are most conducing to the edification and reformation of that congregation to which he preacheth.

Before the close of the public duties, the minister is, in his own and the people's names, to engage his and their hearts to be the Lord's, with professed purpose and resolution to reform whatever is amiss among them, and more particularly such sins as they have been more remarkably guilty of; and to draw near unto God, and to walk more closely and faithfully with him in new obedience, than ever before.

He is also to admonish the people, with all importunity, that the work of that day doth not end with the public duties of it, but that they are so to improve the remainder of the day, and of their whole life, in reinforcing upon themselves and their families in private all those godly affections and resolutions which they profes-

sed in public, as that they may be settled in their hearts for ever, and themselves may more sensibly find that God hath smelt a sweet savour in Christ from their performances, and is pacified towards them, by answers of grace, in pardoning of sin, in removing of judgments, in averting or preventing of plagues, and in conferring of blessings, suitable to the conditions and prayers of his people, by Jesus Christ.

Besides solemn and general fasts enjoined by authority, we judge that, at other times, congregations may keep days of fasting, as divine Providence shall administer unto them special occasion; and also that families may do the same, so it be not on days wherein the congregation to which they do belong is to meet for fasting, or other publick duties of worship.

Concerning the Observation of Days of Publick Worship.

When any such day is to be kept, let notice be given of it, and of the occasion thereof, some convenient time before, that the people may the better prepare themselves thereunto.

The day being come, and the congregation (after private preparations) being assembled, the minister is to begin with a word of exhortation, to stir up the people to the duty for which they are met, and with a short prayer for God's assistance and blessing (as at other conventions for public worship), according to the particular occasion of their meeting.

Let him then make some pithy narration of the deliverance obtained, or mercy received, or of whatever hath occasioned that assembling of the congregation, that all may better understand it, or be minded of it, and more affected with it.

And, because singing of psalms is of all other the most proper ordinance for expressing of joy and thanksgiving, let some pertinent psalm or psalms be sung for that purpose, before or after the reading of some portion of the word suitable to the present business.

Then let the minister, who is to preach, proceed to further exhortation and prayer before his sermon, with special reference to the present work: after which, let him preach upon some text of scripture pertinent to the occasion.

The sermon ended, let him not only pray, as at other times after preaching is directed, with remembrance of the necessities of the Church, King, and State (if before the sermon they were omitted), but enlarge himself in due and solemn thanksgiving for former mercies and deliverances; but more especially for that which at the present calls them together to give thanks: with humble petition for the continuance and renewing of God's wonted mercies, as need shall be, and for sanctifying grace to make a right use thereof. And so, having sung another psalm, suitable to the mercy, let him dismiss the congregation with a blessing, that they may have some convenient time for their repast and refreshing.

But the minister (before their dismission) is solemnly to admonish them to beware of all excess and riot, tending to gluttony or drunkenness, and much more of these sins themselves, in their eating and refreshing; and to take care that their mirth and rejoicing be not carnal, but spiritual, which may make God's praise to be glorious, and themselves humble and sober; and that both their feeling and rejoicing may render them more cheerful and enlarged, further to celebrate his praises in the midst of the congregation, when they return unto it in the remaining part of that day.

When the congregation shall be again assembled, the like course in praying,

reading, preaching, singing of psalms, and offering up of more praise and thanksgiving, that is before directed for the morning, is to be renewed and continued, so far as the time will give leave.

At one or both of the publick meetings that day, a collection is to be made for the poor (and in like manner upon the day of publick humiliation), that their loins may bless us, and rejoice the more with us. And the people are to be exhorted, at the end of the latter meeting, to spend the residue of that day in holy duties, and testifications of Christian love and charity one towards another, and of rejoicing more and more in the Lord; as becometh those who make the joy of the Lord their strength.

Of Singing of Psalms.

It is the duty of Christians to praise God publickly, by singing of psalms together in the congregation, and also privately in the family.

In singing of psalms, the voice is to be tunably and gravely ordered; but the chief care must be to sing with understanding, and with grace in the heart, making melody unto the Lord.

That the whole congregation may join herein, every one that can read is to have a psalm book; and all others, not disabled by age or otherwise, are to be exhorted to learn to read. But for the present, where many in the congregation cannot read, it is convenient that the minister, or some other fit person appointed by him and the other ruling officers, do read the psalm, line by line, before the singing thereof.

AN APPENDIX,

Touching Days or Places for Publick Worship.

There is no day commanded in scripture to be kept holy under the gospel but the Lord's day, which is the Christian Sabbath.

Festival-days, vulgarly called *Holy-days*, having no warrant in the word of God, are not to be continued.

Nevertheless, it is lawful and necessary, upon special emergent occasions, to separate a day or days for publick fasting or thanksgiving, as the several eminent and extraordinary dispensations of God's providence shall administer cause and opportunity to his people.

As no place is capable of any holiness, under pretence of whatsoever dedication or consecration; so neither is it subject to such pollution by any superstition formerly used, and now laid aside, as may render it unlawful or inconvenient for Christians to meet together therein for the publick worship of God. And therefore we hold it requisite, that the places of publick assembling for worship among us should be continued and employed to that use.

PART III.

FORMS AND SERVICE OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

Marriage Service.

Although the marriage of parties who are desirous of entering into the relationship subsisting between man and wife, partakes of the nature of a civil contract, and may be legally carried out, independently of ministerial aid,—in almost every instance the parties desire to be united by the clergyman of the district, or by a minister belonging to the denomination with which they are connected. The purpose of marriage requires to be duly intimated three times in the parish church, besides which, by a recent enactment, a paper, to be had on application to the registrar of the parish or district, requires to be procured, and the details specified in that paper furnished by the parties; after which, two witnesses present, besides the clergyman, must attest that the marriage has been regularly performed. This paper is to be returned to the registrar within three days, under a penalty, that the requisite entries may be made in his books.

It is not necessary nor expedient that the marriage ceremony should be protracted. The address delivered on the occasion should be conveyed in few and fitting words. The service is commenced and closed with prayer, and the husband and wife may be addressed in such terms as will be found appended:—

Prayer.

Almighty and everlasting God! we would draw near to Thee with reverence and awe. Thou art the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, to whom we owe every breath which we draw, and every feeling of which we are conscious. By Thy providence, and in Thy wisdom, all the events in the past period of our lives have been or-

dered. If the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have enjoyed a goodly heritage, to Thee the debt of gratitude is due; and when we reflect upon the past, our souls, and all that is within us, should be stirred up to bless Thy holy name.

More especially, we praise Thee that Thy word has been furnished to us as a directory of conduct; wherein we have line upon line, and precept upon precept: meant to guide us in the discharge of life's varied duties.

Through its precepts may we get understanding, and learn to hate every false way.

Met as we are now, we entreat Thy presence and blessing. Hear us, O Lord, and answer us according to the riches of Thy mercy and loving kindness.

We thank Thee, especially, for the station assigned to man amidst Thine other works: that Thou hast placed conscience to be Thy vicegerent within his breast, hast given him reason and understanding, and hast sanctioned arrangements intended to contribute to the security of human virtue, and the increase of human happiness.

Deign, we beseech Thee, to countenance with a blessing that service in which we are to be engaged. As these individuals have been brought together in Thy providence, may they be sanctified by Thy grace, and prepared for the duties of that state upon which they now propose to enter. Acknowledging Thee in all their ways, do Thou be pleased to direct their steps aright,—granting them in this world a knowledge of Thy Truth, and in the world to come life everlasting. And all that we ask, is in the name and for the sake of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom, with Thee and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory ascribed, now and ever. Amen.

The minister then addresses himself to the intending husband and wife, naming the parties.

"If there be any reason why you should not be joined together in marriage, let it now be declared."

"You will join hands." This being done, he says—

"You "A. B." do take this woman whom you hold by the hand to be your lawful and wedded wife, before God, and in presence of these witnesses, and you promise that you will be to her a faithful, loving, and affectionate husband, until God in his providence shall separate you by death?"

On the bridegroom assenting, he says to the bride—

"You "C. D." do take this man whom you now hold by the

hand to be your lawful and wedded husband, before God, and in presence of these witnesses, and you promise that you will be to him a faithful, loving, and obedient wife, until God in his providence shall separate you by death?"

The bride's assent having been signified, the minister says—

"In the name of God, I now declare you to be married persons, and whom God hath joined, let no man put asunder." He then addresses the parties in some such form as follows:—

Exhortation.

The relationship upon which you have entered, is one which involves the discharge of serious and important duties, and is not to be lightly gone about. In respect of the obligations which it supposes, we find clear and explicit directions given in the inspired Word, which is meant to be a directory of our conduct.

Therein it is said, "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ also loved his church, and gave himself for it;" and from the reciprocal nature of this connection, there must be corresponding duties arising out of it. It pre-supposes love, confidence, and esteem; and as the relationship is one that is to last during life, it should be the aim of both parties concerned, that those feelings of mutual confidence and esteem which have induced them to think of a marriage union, instead of decreasing, should be augmented with each successive year that passes over their heads.

The connection is therefore one which should be entered into in that "fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom."

With reference to those obligations which are specially binding upon the husband,—he is called upon to love and cherish his wife, with all honour and fidelity; to guard her from injury as the weaker vessel; in the assiduous discharge of the duties of his lawful calling, to make provision for the wants of those whom God has entrusted to his keeping; and, as occupying the position of the head of a household, to rule that household well in the fear of the Lord; showing a becoming regard in his daily life for the relative, social, and religious duties.

If such obligations be incumbent upon the husband, from the reciprocal nature of this connection, there must be similar duties devolving upon the wife. If her husband is to love and cherish her with honour and fidelity, she is called upon to esteem and honour him. If he is enjoined to provide for the wants of those connected with him, so, a virtuous woman, as Solomon observes, "looks

well to her own household." She "eateth not the bread of idleness;" and much of the future comfort and respectability of a married pair, will depend upon the prudence and economy with which she regulates matters: while lastly, if the husband is called upon, by a sense of duty to God, and by regard to the highest interests of others, to maintain and keep alive the stated worship of God in his household, it becomes her to cherish the same aim, and, if it shall please God to bless the union with children, to make it her desire that they, both in time and throughout eternity, may have reason to bless those who have given them being.

In short, it is the duty of both mutually to assist, comfort, and encourage one another, seeking so to bear each other's burdens, as that they may fulfil the law of Christ. Let us pray.

Concluding Prayer.

Follow, O Lord, with a blessing, we beseech Thee, that act which we have now performed. We commend to Thy care the parties who have entered upon this relationship. Grant them that portion of temporal happiness which is befitting, and enable them so to bear each other's burdens, as that they may fulfil the law of Christ. May they take thy Word as the directory of their conduct, and seek after Thy favour which is life, and Thy loving kindness which is better than life.

Impress upon us a conviction that the ties of earth are but transitory in duration, so that we may rejoice as though we rejoiced not, and weep as though we wept not. Help us all diligently and faithfully to discharge the duties incumbent upon us in our several stations and relations. While not slothful in business, may we also be fervent in spirit, loving and serving Thee the one living and true God; seeking to avoid fleshly lusts, to have our walk honest before men, and to have our conversation in heaven. Enrich us with Thy grace. Uphold us by Thy Spirit. Guide us while we live in this world by Thy counsel, and fit us for participation in the glory which is hereafter to be revealed; for the sake of Christ Jesus, who once dignified by His presence a marriage feast, and who hath left us an example that we should walk in His steps. Amen.

Baptismal Service.

The sacrament of Baptism, except when particular reasons render its private administration expedient, is most suitably dispensed within the church. The infant is in the ordinance admitted as a member of Christ's visible church. All parents who are present are reminded of solemn and important duties toward their offspring, and the infant is commended to the prayers and solicitude of the office-bearers and members of the congregation.

When the sacrament of Baptism is administered in the house, it is usual and proper to commence by invoking the Divine blessing. The form now given is, with the exception of the introductory prayer, suitable also for the administration of baptism in public.

Introductory Prayer.

Almighty and ever-blessed God! who hast promised that wheresoever two or three are met together, Thou wilt be in the midst of them, hear now our supplications. Thou art the King eternal, immortal, and invisible; the Father of lights, without variableness or shadow of turning; a God of love and wisdom, who appointest all the incidents of our earthly life. We were early cast upon Thy bounty and Thou hast not ceased to care for us: Who hast been our protector in danger, the healer of our diseases, and a very present help in the time of trouble. We are indebted to Thee for countless mercies. Thine is the food that we eat and the raiment wherewith we are clothed; to Thee we owe the powers of the body and the faculties of the mind.

Especially, O Lord, we bless and praise Thee for the revelation of Thy truth and mercy, given through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; who bare our sins in His own body on the tree; who died the just for the unjust; who gave Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice. In His name, and for His sake, we beg the remission of our sins. On His account, be pleased to receive us graciously and to love us freely. Pardon our unworthiness, and enable us at this time to make to Thee an acceptable approach.

Father of mercies! who despisest not the cry of the penitent: Lord Jesus Christ, Saviour of sinners: Holy Spirit, the Comforter,

three persons and one God, hear our earnest supplications, and to Thy name be all the glory, world without end. Amen.

Address to the Parent.

You present this child unto the Lord, and you desire that *he* (or *she*) may be admitted a member of Christ's visible Church, and may receive the seal of the covenant of grace?

Baptism (as the standards of our Church define it), is a sacrament wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our engrafting into Christ, our partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.

It is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible Church, till they profess their faith in Christ and obedience to Him; but the infants of such as are members of the visible Church are to be baptized.

Baptism has come in the place and room of circumcision, the external ordinance of admission into the Church, under the Old Testament economy; and while, like the other institutions of our holy faith, it is simple in itself, it is not the less significant.

We employ water in administering this ordinance in token of the necessity of our being cleansed from original corruption and actual sin, which can only be from the application of Christ's blood, through the exercise of faith, to the heart and conscience. As, by nature, born in sin and shapen in iniquity, we stand in need of being renewed; and it is characteristic of Christ's people, who are spoken of as "buried with Him in baptism," that they seek to "walk with Him in newness of life."

Baptism lays those to whom it is administered under solemn obligations. But, as infants are incapable of entering into the scope and meaning of these (though there be ample warrant for the administration of the ordinance even at so early a period), you, the parent of this child, now take them upon you on his behalf.

I ask no formal acknowledgment of your belief in the great truths contained in Christ's Gospel and in the divine Word; since these your Christian profession justifies me in taking for granted.

But you promise to train up this little one in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; to give him the best instruction in your power, admonishing him to follow after wisdom's ways of pleasantness and her paths of peace; acquainting him with the meaning of this dedication which you are now making of him to the service of a

Father in heaven; and urging him (if you and he be spared together so long), to take these vows upon himself, by commemorating the death of Christ in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, which He has also appointed?

And you likewise promise that, besides instructing your child in the way wherein he ought to go, it will be your concern and desire, by God's strength and blessing, to set before him a good, pious, and Christian example, seeking to walk according to the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless?

These obligations, incumbent upon all who present their children for baptism, you now promise through divine grace to discharge?

The parent having signified his assent, the minister goes on to say:—

"Let us pray."

Prayer before Baptism.

Solemnize our minds, we again beseech Thee, O Lord, as we would draw near to Thee, and enable us to render to Thee acceptable service.

We thank Thee for all the ordinances and institutions of our holy faith, more especially for that sacrament which we are about to administer. We bless Thee that our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, before He left this world and ascended on high, gave this commission to His disciples, saying, Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

This is a seal and sign of the covenant of grace, of the new covenant with promise. May it, in Thine own good time and way, be accompanied by that reality which it is intended to signify and denote; and grant, O Lord (who workest when, where, and how Thou pleasest), if it be agreeable to Thy holy will, that while we baptize outwardly with water, Thou mayest be pleased also to baptize inwardly and with the Holy Spirit. All that we ask is in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

The minister now sprinkles water on the face of the child, and pronouncing aloud his name, says:—

"I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, one God."

Prayer after Baptism.

Follow, we entreat of Thee, O Lord, with a blessing that act which we have now, in accordance with Thy direction, performed. Spare

him, if it be Thy holy will, for a long, happy, and useful existence in this world. Especially, we pray that he may be of the number of those children who are taught to know the Saviour, and to remember their Creator in the days of their youth. Preserve him from the paths in which destroyers go. Compass him about with Thy protection as a shield. Be his God during the present life, and his portion throughout the ages of eternity.

We thank Thee for Thy goodness shown to the mother, in that Thou hast spared her life, prolonged her days, and enabled a living mther to look upon the face of a living child. May her heart be lifted up to Thee in gratitude and praise, and may the life that has been spared be afresh devoted to the promotion of Thy glory.

Bless both parents in all their interests, temporal and spiritual. Especially may their souls prosper and be in health. May they be heirs together of the grace of life, keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace and righteousness of life.

More especially, at this time, we beseech of Thee, O Lord, that Thou wouldst enable the father of this child faithfully to discharge the solemn vows which he has taken on behalf of the pledge of affection which Thou hast given to him. May he seek to train up this little one for Thyself. Give him the requisite grace and wisdom; and as the fruit of his efforts and prayers, may his child, not only as now, become a member of Thy Church visible upon earth, but also become a member of that holy and spiritual community, of whom the Lord Jesus Christ is the risen and exalted head.

Saviour! who hast compassion upon the lambs of the fold, Thou good Shepherd, who slumberest not nor sleepest! to Thee we commend all the young of this congregation. Take them, we beseech Thee, under Thy guidance. Touch their hearts, and incline them early to embrace Thy Service.

Impress upon all of us, O Lord, that, as we have been admitted into Thy Church by the ordinance of baptism, and bear the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, so we are called upon to put on Christ. May He be formed in us the hope of glory. May we be crucified with Him to the world, and, as risen with Him, seek the things that are bove, where He sitteth at Thy right hand. Number us with Thy saints who shall attain to glory everlasting. May we be washed in His blood, be animated by His Spirit, and reflect His image: and to Thee be glory and praise ascribed, world without end. Amen.

Funeral Service.

The Westminster Directory and the practice of the Church of Scotland are at variance with whatever can be construed as having the remotest tendency to superstition. No prayer is offered at the grave. No passage of Scripture is read. But it is usual for the assembled mourners to engage in prayer before the body is removed from the house in which the deceased expired; and, if more than one clergyman be present, two prayers are sometimes offered,—one before, and the other after the distribution, by attendants, of the customary refreshment handed round to those who are inclined to partake of it. We give, however, here, only a general prayer suited to such occasions:—

Prayer.

O Lord, our heavenly Father! we would ever approach Thee under a deep sense of the purity, truth, and justice which are characteristic of Him with whom we have to do. Met together in the house of mourning, and having received another solemn lesson fitted to remind us of our mortality, we pray of Thee to solemnise our hearts.

Man, though he be in honour, abideth not. Unnumbered are the dangers we are exposed to, and many are the diseases by which we are subject to be attacked. Our breath is in our nostrils. We dwell in cottages of clay, and are liable to be crushed even as before the moth. Here, assuredly, we have no continuing city or place of abode, and, ere long, the place that now knows us shall know us no more for ever.

Yet, just and true are all Thy ways, O Thou King of saints! Death reigns in the world as the consequence of sin; no man can save himself, or redeem his brother. His footstep enters into lordly halls as well as into poor men's dwellings. His blow often smites the cherished of our hearts. The young and old, the apparently robust and infirm, are alike exposed to the ravages of this destroyer.

But we bless Thee, heavenly Father, that Jesus Christ hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light in his Gospel; that upon the darkness of the sepulchre He hath shed a cheering lustre, who is Himself the first fruits of them that sleep; that He arose, a conqueror from the grave; finished the work given

Him to do; and is now exalted, a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins; so that if the wages of sin be death, the gift of God is eternal life through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We praise and bless Thee, O Lord for this reviving hope; that we are called to look upon a suffering, risen, and ascended Redeemer; a great High Priest, who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities; who wept at Lazarus' grave; who sympathises with the woes and sufferings of humanity; and is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother.

Met in the house of mourning, we commend to Thee a bereaved family. Thou hast entered this dwelling and vindicated Thy prerogative to take life away; teaching them and us that the dust must return to dust, and the spirit go to Him who gave it. In their distress, may they be led to the abiding and sufficient ground of consolation; and, by the sadness of the countenance, may the heart be made better. Sustain them under the pressure of this blow; and enable them to say, Father, not our will, but Thine be done: Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and not also submit to that which seemeth evil? Enable them to look forward to the glory which is to be revealed, and, in faith, to anticipate that time when the grave shall give up its dead, the corruptible put on incorruption, and the now dying frame be clothed with the full honours of immortality.

The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but, thanks be to God, who giveth the victory through Jesus Christ; whose servant heard a voice proclaiming, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord: yea, saith the Spirit, they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them. I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death.

Enable thy servants, in faith and love, to look unto Jesus the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world, and to anticipate His second coming with hope and expectation, when the voice of the archangel and the trump of God shall announce that time shall be no more; and when Jesus shall appear, to be glorified in his saints, and admired of all that have believed.

While we pray that Thou wouldst be pleased to comfort those who are most directly concerned in this visitation, teaching them to profit by it, we beseech Thee also to impress upon us all a sense of frailty and a feeling of dependance. Man that is born of woman

is but of few days and full of trouble. He often walketh in vain show, and disquieteth himself in vain. Teach us to live as those should do, whose days are numbered, yea, who know not what an hour may bring forth. May we live with our loins girt and our lamps burning, prepared to meet and welcome the bridegroom's summons; our hope resting on the sure foundation; our lives devoted to the service of the Redeemer. May we use the world as not abusing it, knowing that the fashion of it passeth away. Coveting earnestly the best gifts, and reconciled to Thee through Jesus Christ, may we have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but put on the whole armour of light; being stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; seeking the city which hath foundations, and remembering that we are strangers and sojourners before Thee, as all our fathers were.

We thank Thee for the comfort and support often experienced by Thy people when they were called upon to pass through the valley of the shadow of death, and found that the everlasting arms were around them, and that by Thee they were conducted to rest. May we live the life and die the death of the righteous. When the summons comes to ourselves, may we be enabled, with Thy servant, to say, I know in whom I have believed. I have finished the course, and kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.

Sustain us, O Lord, by Thy mighty power. Quicken us, that we may call upon Thy name. In the land of the living, we would praise Thee: And in the time of disease, at the hour of death, and at the day of judgment, have mercy upon us, for Christ Jesus' sake. Amen.

A prayer of this description, of course, varies according to the particular circumstances of the family bereaved. The preceding form is meant to be suggestive of truths adapted to the occasion.

Sabbath Service.

MORNING PRAYER.

Sabbath Forenoon Service.

PSALM.

PRAYER.

Almighty and most gracious God, who in six days didst create the heavens and the earth, and, as an example to Thine offspring, and designing their privilege and benefit, didst rest from Thy works on the seventh day, and sanctify it; help us now to approach Thee with solemnity and reverence. While we draw near with our mouths and honour Thee with our lips, assuming the appearance of worshippers in Thy presence; forbid that the hearts of any of us should be estranged, or that our thoughts should wander upon the mountains of vanity.

We adore Thee as the living and true God, as the King eternal, immortal, and invisible, as the source of life from whom all things proceed, and on whom all continually depend. Around us we observe manifold traces of power, wisdom, and goodness. The heavens are Thine, Thou hast made them bright with Thy glory. The earth is Thine. Thou imposest bounds on the sea which it cannot overpass; hast weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in balances. Yet whilst Thou art the Father of light, without variableness or shadow of turning; whilst Thou reckonest the host of heaven, and callest them by their names; Thou turnest unto every one that is humble and of contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble and the hearts of the contrite.

Help us to order our speech aright when we bow ourselves before Thee. We come as Thy dependent offspring, early cast upon Thy bounty, who hast cared for us. Dangers have surrounded our daily path, but the Lord has been our helper. Many have been removed, but we are still spared. Some of us may have been raised from what was apparently the bed of death. Others can remember peculiar interpositions occurring in Thy providence. Thus far hast Thou brought us all along the journey of life; and we may well say, Bless the Lord O our souls, and forget not all his benefits. The Lord has done great things for us, on account of which we are glad. To Thee we owe all we have and all that we can enjoy. Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are Thy ways, O Thou King of Saints!

We adore thee for the mercies of creation and providence, and would render the humble tribute of our praise,—remembering more particularly the surpassing evidence of Thy goodness shown to the needy and undone,—the guilty and polluted,—displayed in that scheme of redemption on which angels look with adoring wonder, but which specially refers to sinners of our race. We praise and magnify Thy name, that when justice called for punishment, mercy interfered; that when the covenant entered into with our first parents had been violated, the purpose of divine mercy was revealed, and instead of our being left to meet the doom that had been merited, a Saviour was predicted—a Deliverer appeared, who, while thinking it not robbery to be equal with God, yet made himself of no reputation, took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross—who magnified the law and made it honourable—finished the work that was given Him to do—has ascended to the right hand of the Majesty on high, and is now our Advocate and Intercessor within the veil.

May we, O Lord, be accepted in the beloved—in Christ Jesus who assumed our nature. May we see in Him our Great High Priest, and the model and pattern of His people. We bless Thee, O God, who hadst compassion on us in our lost, undone condition, Thee, O Redeemer, who didst not despise the virgin's womb, Thee, O Holy Spirit, whom Jesus promised to His disciples. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God, Thy help we entreat, and for Thy grace we pray.

May we feel that we are bound to the Lord Jesus by ties of no ordinary obligation. May we confide in His sacrifice, hear His voice, and be conformed to His example. Raise us, O Father, from the death of trespasses and sins, that we may walk with Thee in newness of life. Open our eyes that we may see wonderful things out of Thy law, and enlarge our hearts that we may walk in the way of Thy commandments. May we be found in Christ, who is made unto His people, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption, and give ourselves up to Him who gave himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. May we be sanctified by the indwelling of the Spirit, and be prepared for beholding Thy face in glory. Work in us to will and to do of Thy good pleasure, and enable us to give all diligence in the pursuit of heavenly blessings, and the attainment of a present deliverance from the power of sin, and the love and practice of iniquity.

We need the wisdom that cometh from above, for it is not in man to direct his steps aright; while, though the spirit should be in a measure willing, yet the flesh is weak. Enlighten our understandings, we beseech Thee, O God. Renew our wills. Sanctify our hearts. Raise us above the fear of man—the ensnaring influence of the world—and guard us against the malice and power of our spiritual adversary; that, not walking in darkness, we may participate in the light of life. Keep our affections from the love of idols; our characters from the stains of vice; our profession from the appearance of evil; and may our whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless until the coming of Christ Jesus. Help us to use the world as not abusing it, to occupy the talents committed to our stewardship, and to redeem the time. May we walk in wisdom towards those that are without, and with kindness to those that are within—doing good to all as we have opportunity, especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Met to praise and bless Thy name; asssembled on the first day of the week in honour of the Redeemer, we plead for the blessing of Him who is the King and Head of the Church. May our assembling together be profitable. Send forth, O Lord, Thy light and Thy truth. Enable thy servant faithfully to declare the message from Thy word, and enable this people to hear with the earnest desire of deriving profit from his message.

Be with us in reading a portion of Thy word. Accept of the tribute of our praises, and hear the voice of our supplications, which we offer to Thee, in the name of Christ Jesus, our Advocate and Mediator. Amen.

READING OF A PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

LECTURE OR SERMON.

CONCLUDING PRAYER.

Follow with thy blessing, O Lord, the service in which we have now been engaged. May the fruit be unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. Awaken the unconcerned. Guide such as would enquire after the way to Zion, and make us all to feel the infinite importance of knowing Thee, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent, whom to know is life eternal.

We thank Thee for all the means of Grace which Thou hast instituted—for the word, sacraments, and prayer. Let Thy word have free cause and be glorified. May sinners be turned from the error

of their ways, and the disobedient unto the wisdom of the just. Revive Thy work in the midst of us, O Lord. Make bare Thy holy arm, and grant us times of refreshing from Thy presence.

Bless those now before Thee in all their interests, temporal and spiritual: especially may their souls prosper and be in health.

Bless Thy whole church, we beseech Thee—all who worship the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. May grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied on them all; and bless, we entreat Thee also, that portion of Thy Son's church with which we are connected. Be as a wall of fire around our Zion, and the glory in the midst of her. Clothe her priests with salvation, and let her saints and people shout for joy.

We give Thee thanks, O Lord, for what of Thy goodness we have at this time enjoyed. Dismiss with Thy blessing, after we have anew sung to Thy praise. Be with us during the interval of worship, and come up with Thy servant and people in the afternoon.—All that we ask is in the name of Jesus. Amen.

CONCLUDING PSALM OR PARAPHRASE.

THE BLESSING.

The Grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and ever. Amen.

Afternoon Service.

PSALM.

PRAYER.

O Lord! We come before Thee, at this time, impressed with a sense of Thy glorious and awful majesty. Who is a God like unto Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, continually doing wonders? The gods of the heathen are but dumb idols: mouths have they, but they speak not; ears, but they hear not; hands, but they handle not; feet, but they walk not: they that made them are like unto them, so is every one that trusteth in them. But Thou art the eternal and self-existent Jehovah, who doest according to Thy will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; who searchest the hearts and triest the reins of the children of men. Thou art clothed with honour and majesty; Thou coverest thyself with light as with a garment; Thou art the Father of light, without variableness or shadow of turning. The heavens are thine, Thou hast made them bright with Thy glory; the earth also is thine, it was brought into being by the word of thine almighty

power. These, the works of Thy hand, shall perish, but Thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old as a garment, and as a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed; but Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end. The time is coming when the firmament above us, and the earth beneath, shall be burnt up; but none can hide himself in secret places from Thy sight, who art not far from any one of us. Whither can we go from Thy presence, who art unsearchable in Thy judgments, who in Thy ways art past finding out?

When we consider our state and condition before Thee, to us belong shame and confusion of face. We have sinned before heaven, and in Thy sight, and are no more worthy to be called Thy children. Of old Thou didst create man in thine image, and after thine own likeness; Thou didst endow him with sovereignty over the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air; Thou didst admit him to converse with Thyself, and furnish him with all that could promote the happiness of his being. But man, being in honour, abode not: how has the gold become dim, and the most fine gold been changed! By one man sin has entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death hath passed upon all, for that all have sinned. We lie beneath the curse of a broken law; by nature we are subject to the displeasure of the Lord of heaven and earth. The very ground has been cursed because of the disobedience and apostasy of man. In the mortality which reigns around, we see the fearful consequences of sin; and the depravity of our hearts attests the working of its poison. We were shapen in iniquity, and are a people of unclean lips. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. Naturally, our understandings are darkened, our hearts are estranged, our wills are perverse; we are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in us; the imaginations of the thoughts of our hearts are evil continually. We have followed after lying vanities; have forsaken the fountain of living water for the broken cistern, which can hold no water. Unfaithful stewards, we have not improved the talents entrusted to us; not liking to retain Thee in our knowledge, we have suffered other lords and gods to have dominion over us, and have not sought the promotion of Thy glory as the great object of our existence.

We praise Thee, O Lord, that Thou hast not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities; that Thou waitest to be gracious, and art in Christ Jesus reconciling the world unto Thyself, not imputing unto men their trespasses; unwilling

that any should perish, but that all should come unto Thee and live. This is Thy language to the sons of men: "Come now, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool." Thou hast invited the labouring and heavy-laden to come unto Christ, that they may find rest for their souls. O purge us with hyssop, and we shall be clean; yea, wash us, and we shall be whiter than snow. May we be justified freely by Thy grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; may the spark of divine love be kindled in our cold and insensate hearts. Begin the good work in us if we are still unhappily strangers to newness of life; carry it on to perfection where it is begun. May He who brought again from the dead the Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, by the working of His holy Spirit, enlighten our minds, and sanctify our hearts! May we be united to Christ by a true and living faith, which worketh by love, and purifieth the heart, and overcometh the world; so may we bear fruit unto holiness, and let the end be everlasting life. As risen with Him, who is exalted far above all principalities and powers, having received a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father; may we seek the things that are above, where He sitteth at the right hand of the Majesty on high; having been washed in His precious blood, may we devote ourselves to His service, in newness of life; feeling, in some measure, the constraining power of His love, that so we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour, by a life and conversation becoming the gospel, remembering that He who called us is holy, and has left us an example that we should follow His steps. May others take knowledge of us, that we have been with Jesus, and have learned of Him; that we have imbibed His Spirit, and are seeking to copy His example. May we continually bear about with us His dying, that the life also of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal bodies. Make Thy grace sufficient for us, and perfect Thy strength in our weakness; may we be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Enable us to walk circumspectly; not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, knowing that our days upon earth are few and evil, and that death and eternity are at hand; ready for the coming of the Son of Man, and seeking to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; so that, when He appeareth again in power and glory, when every eye shall see Him, and all must stand

before the throne, we may be of the number of those to whom shall be addressed these gracious words, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world;—that having sought to serve Thee in our day and generation upon earth, we may be admitted, having washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, to serve and praise Thee for ever in the temple above; where the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed His people, and lead them to living fountains of waters, and God himself shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Grant Thy blessing upon thine own ordinances; give us, we implore Thee, the teaching of the Spirit, who can teach savingly and to profit. Help our manifold infirmities. Let Thy word come with power and efficacy to all our hearts. Enable Thy servant to speak, and this people to hear, as for eternity, as it becometh the oracles of the living God to be spoken and heard; for all that we ask is in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour. Amen.

READING OF A PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE.

DISCOURSE.

CONCLUDING PRAYER.

O Lord, we desire to offer up our thanksgivings unto Thee for all the mercy and grace which Thou hast made to pass before us; and to bless Thee for the opportunity which we have now enjoyed of reading and meditating upon Thy word. We praise Thee for the manifestation of the riches of Thy mercy in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory. Forbid that it should be to our condemnation that, while light has come into the world, we should love the darkness rather than the light, because our deeds are evil; that, despising the riches of Thy long-suffering and forbearance, we should be treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of Thy righteous judgment. May we see the beauty and excellency of the Saviour; and be drawn to him by the constraining power of his love; feeling that if one died for all, then were all dead, and that He died that we might walk no more after the flesh, but after the Spirit. May we seek to follow the Captain of our salvation whithersoever He may lead us; walk as the children of the light and of the day, and adorn the doctrine of our God and Saviour by a life and conversation becoming the gospel, as those who are not their own, but bought with a price, and who would devote themselves to His service, who has called sinners out of darkness into marvellous light. Vouchsafe

unto us continual supplies of grace and strength, out of the fulness that is in Christ Jesus, that we may be enabled more and more to put off the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful hearts; and being renewed in the spirit of our minds, may put on the new man, which is created in righteousness and true holiness; having the power of sin more and more subdued in us,—our souls more refined from the dross of earthly corruption,—our hearts more weaned from the world,—our affections more steadfastly fixed on the things that are above; that we may walk with one another in love, as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Let Thy way, O Lord, be known on earth, Thy saving health among all nations. Let Thy kingdom come, and Thy will be done. Give Thy Son the heathen for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the world for a possession, so that the advent of that period may be hastened when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

May a blessing rest on the church universal, on all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth. Let grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied upon all its members. Add daily to the number of such as shall be saved.

Bless, we also pray Thee, that portion of Thy Son's church with which we are more particularly connected. Be as a wall of fire around our Zion, and as the glory in the midst of her. Clothe her priests with salvation, and let her saints and people shout aloud for joy.

Let Thy favour rest upon our native land. Abundantly bless Thy servant, our gracious Sovereign, Queen Victoria. Grant that she may be long spared to sway the sceptre over a free, loyal, and religious people. Bless the Prince Consort, the Prince of Wales, and all the other members of the royal family. As they are highly exalted in earthly station, may they improve the talents committed to their stewardship and attain to a crown of righteousness that shall never fade away.

Bless all who occupy places of authority under the Queen and over us. May the wise and faithful ever be around our Sovereign's throne, men who fear Thee, and have the good of this country sincerely at heart. Overrule the deliberations of Parliament, and guide them to the adoption of those measures which shall be conducive to Thy glory. Bless the nobles, the judges, and the magis-

trates, endowing them with the wisdom which cometh from above and is profitable to direct.

Let Thy blessing rest upon this parish and congregation. Strengthen and direct Thy servant, that he may discharge with diligence and fidelity the duties of the sacred calling. Bless the eldership, and the other members of this flock, that they walk before Thee in holiness and righteousness. Bless them in their basket and store,—in their pursuits of lawful industry,—especially may their souls prosper and be in health.

Relieve, we beseech of Thee, the wants of the poor. Be a Father to the fatherless; the widow's help; the stranger's shield; and the orphan's stay. Guide the young that they may seek the paths of righteousness. Comfort and uphold the aged; and may those who are blessed with health and strength devote themselves more thoroughly to Thy service.

Now dismiss us, we beseech Thee, with Thy blessing, after we have again sung to Thy praise. Be with us during the interval of worship. Come up with Thy servant and people in the afternoon: and let grace, mercy and peace be multiplied upon us, for the sake of Christ Jesus, our strength and Redeemer. Amen.

PSALM OR PARAPHRASE.

THE BLESSING.

Now may the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you and abide with you for ever. Amen.

Communion Sabbath Services.

A Communion Sabbath in Scotland is a day of much interest, more particularly in rural districts, for in towns there are too many who care comparatively little about religious observances. It is now usually celebrated twice a-year; and, previously to the dispensation of the ordinance, notice is given by the minister of the parish, on a previous Sabbath, of a day or days upon which he will be found ready to converse with those who desire to communicate for the first time. Many ministers have also their Scriptural classes, or those especially preparatory for the ordinance. The latter should be held for a succession of weeks previously, and are, in many cases, found to be extremely useful. On all occasions the dispensation of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in the Established Church is preceded by the observance of a day of humiliation and prayer, usually, except local causes prevent, held upon a Thursday. A preparatory sermon, with accompanying devotional exercises, is also preached upon the Saturday before Communion, as well as a thanksgiving sermon upon the Monday following.

In the estimate of not a few ministers and members of the Church, it is a question whether the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper should not be more frequently observed, and whether it is necessary to have all the preceding and subsequent diets of worship, which have hitherto been held; for it is notorious that in many parishes there is both on the Saturday and Monday a very scanty attendance, in no small degree caused by the necessary occupation of many members of the congregation by secular duty. Some there are who think that there is a spirit of formalism connected with these preliminary arrangements; and that, if Christians be animated by a proper spirit, they do not stand in need of so great an amount of preparation before sitting down at the Lord's table; a summons which should ever be congenial to their spirits,—a service which is fitted to yield both profit and delight.

We do not give any specimens of forms of worship, either for the day of humiliation, for the Saturday, or for the Monday. The requirements of the two former services will readily be imagined; and the discourse upon the Monday morning as upon the Sabbath evening will appropriately turn upon some practical topic,—touching upon the duties which the followers of Christ are called upon to observe,—or upon the hopes which, if His true disciples, they are warranted to entertain. Deviating, however, so far from our previous plan, we shall lay before our readers,—believing that it may be of use to some of the younger clergy, and not unprofitable to aged and infirm Christians, in their retirement,—a full narrative of the services of the Communion Sabbath, as usually observed in the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The service commences as upon the ordinary diets of worship, by the presiding minister, who is generally assisted by one or more of his brethren in course of the subsequent services, announcing a Psalm to be sung by the congregation. He then offers up prayer in some such manner as follows; though it may be remarked that, as the Communion service is in a measure distinct from the ordinary Sabbath worship, and except as following close upon the other, is a distinct and separate service, not more than an incidental reference is in this case required to give unity and consistency to the services of the day. Ordinarily, however, and it is to be hoped, often, the minds and hearts of both minister and people are deeply impressed by a sense of the solemnity of the transaction in which they are mutually to be afterwards engaged.

Forenoon Sabbath Service.

INTRODUCTORY PRAYER.

Father of mercies, and God of consolation! God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ! Having now entered the courts of Thy house, we would worship in reverence towards Thy holy temple, beseeching Thee to listen to our hearts' desire, and to save us according to Thy truth and mercy. We approach Thee, to whom all flesh are invited to come, as the only true and living God, through the one Mediator, Jesus Christ the righteous. May we not come before Thee with wandering minds, with souls slightly affected by a sense of Thy greatness and of our unworthiness, but with true hearts, and with filial confidence, having our souls sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed as with pure water.

Thou art the living and Eternal One, highly exalted above our loftiest conceptions, and able to do exceeding abundantly above what we can ask or think. Thou art glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, continually doing wonders. All creation reflects Thy glory; the heavens and the earth bear witness to Thy perfections. Thou orderest all events wisely and well, causing all things to work together for good to those who are called according to Thy purpose and grace; and in the scheme of redemption we are called upon to marvel at the richness of Thy loving-kindness shown to the creatures of the dust.

We are, O Lord, not only frail but guilty creatures. We acknowledge that we are involved in the apostacy of our first parents, and have often given evidence that our hearts are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Amidst the traces of Thy glory which the universe exhibits, we have forgotten Thee. Receiving unnumbered benefits, we have not thought of the hand by which they were bestowed. Endowed with a reasonable and immortal nature, we have been far more busied in providing for the life that now is, than for that which is to come. So situated as to exert influence over others, we have forgotten the law and the commandment of love, have been unmindful of responsibility thence arising, and have been living to ourselves. Admonished that sin is justly most offensive in Thy sight, and the object of abhorrence to Him with whom we have to do; yet we have given way to its commission in secret, if we have refrained from grosser and open acts of delinquency and provocation. Having talents given us which ought to have been

improved, we have, alas! been unprofitable stewards. Admonished by instances wherein the night that must descend has come speedily upon others, we have still been slothful and inactive. Although aroused to momentary enquiry and consideration, yet we have again been prone to relapse into slumber and indifference, as though our house would continue for ever, and our strength not be weakened away.

But we come before Thee, not less persuaded of our own unworthiness and folly, than of the riches of Thy grace and mercy. We believe—help Thou our unbelief—that thine illuminating and quickening Spirit is not straitened; that He can draw us to Thyself by uniting us to Christ; so that, utterly needy, we may be enriched out of his fulness; and naked, be clothed upon with His righteousness; and polluted, may wash in that fountain which has been opened for sin and uncleanness. As the branch cannot bear fruit in itself, unless it abide in the vine, neither can we but as abiding in Him. We beseech Thee then to draw us by the cords of love. Let thy promises find in us a response; may Thy threatenings make us afraid; and, under a sense of great and pressing necessity, may we rest upon that covenant which is well ordered in all things, and sure.

Take Thou away our iniquity, and receive us graciously and love us freely. Enable us to hate sin as the cause of our misery, and to love righteousness as that new and better way in which thou wouldst have us walk. May we set our affections on the things that are above, and be raised superior to the influence of a present evil world. Let the love of Christ constrain us, and may we be animated by a spirit of new obedience.

Enlarge our acquaintance with revealed truth. May we hide Thy word in our hearts, that we may not offend against Thee; and let Thy statutes be our counsellors in this the land of our pilgrimage. Succour us in the time of weakness; direct us in the period of uncertainty. Stablish and confirm us in every good word or work. May we drink more deeply of our Master's Spirit, and arise and follow the Captain of salvation whithersoever He leads, taking the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit; having our loins girt about with truth; and our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace. And as there has been revealed to us the prospect of that land where all impurity and imperfection shall for ever be done away—as we are called to look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, oh! may we strive more

diligently that our calling and election may be sure; desire to advance from one degree of grace unto another, and seek to be more thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work.

Be with us in all the exercises in which we are to be engaged this day, and hear the voice of our earnest supplications, for the Redeemer's sake. Amen.

A chapter of Scripture is usually next read, descriptive either of the sufferings of Christ, or bearing upon the subject of the day's solemnity. After this a second Psalm is sung, the Lord's Prayer, as in ordinary forenoon diets of worship, is appropriately offered up, and the minister proceeds to deliver what, according to technical phraseology, is called the Action Sermon, in which it is expected he will endeavour to stir the hearts and rouse the consciences of his hearers to the best of his ability. The appended sermon is introduced, like that which follows in the evening service, with a view simply of suggesting topics that may not be unuseful on such an occasion. It lays no claim to originality of thought, but it is at least not unsuitable.

The Death of Christ.

"He bowed his head and gave up the ghost."—St. John xix. 30.

The transaction referred to, was the most momentous since the beginning of the world. To those who were uninstructed regarding the dignity of the Messiah, or the plan of God for the salvation of the guilty, the recital of it might seem only to contain the mention of a common and universal fact. In view of the spectators who looked upon the scene of Calvary, it was the death of one who had been condemned by the national tribunal—their verdict confirmed by the Roman Governor—a verdict which had been carried into effect under circumstances of much aggravation and disgrace. But in the conception of every pious and enlightened mind, it suggests a subject of wonder and admiration, as displaying infinite love and divine compassion. When known by the hosts of heaven, it would fill them with amazement, as we are informed, it constitutes a theme of adoring praise and reverent acknowledgment. These "watchers and holy ones" are spoken of in the book of Revelation, as celebrating above the praises of the Lamb, although in His death they are not so directly and immediately concerned as those for whom Jesus "took part of flesh and blood."

An event so constantly spoken of in scripture, brought under our notice in so many varied ways, described as having a bearing so important upon the interests of the church on earth, and also as administering instruction to the church in heaven, merits careful study and devout attention. Let us endeavour, at this time, shortly to consider one or two of the chief purposes, which it is to be viewed as securing, and is adapted to promote.

I. In the *first* place, when Jesus "gave up the ghost," he died as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of as many as believe in him.

Scripture tells us that all mankind lay in a condition of degradation and guilt—that they were unable to procure a reversal of the sentence whereby they were condemned, or to effect a restoration to the divine favour forfeited through transgression. "In Adam all died." He was the covenant head and representative of His posterity. Nor is it possible to conceive of more favourable circumstances under which human obedience could have been tested, than when, with the full supply of every want accorded, there was but one restriction laid upon the pure and upright being who was formed after the image of his Maker. When, however, our first parents allowed themselves to be overcome through the ingenuity of the tempter, evil entered the world, and its bitter results became apparent. They necessarily incurred the penalty of death, which had been righteously announced as the consequence of transgression. In that act, moreover, scripture declares, and experience attests that their descendants were involved. It rendered necessary the interposition of a Saviour, if the everlasting gates were not to be for ever closed, the way of access to the holiest shut up, and the regions of immortal blessedness to continue inaccessible. In ourselves do we not feel proneness to what is evil, and aversion to what is good? Which of us is not naturally disqualified for, and unfitted to endure the presence of a pure and heart-searching God? Let us consider of what complexion the tenor of our lives has been. How many acts have been committed at variance with the divine authority, and contrary to the precepts of that law which is "holy, just, and good;" to which this terrific sanction is annexed, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." If we are doubtful as to the *consequences* of transgression, let us observe the altered demeanour of our first parents after they had fallen. No longer do they welcome and desire fellowship with God; alarm and suspicion have taken possession of their souls. Seeking for protection, full of misgivings, and conscious of impurity, they attempt to

hide in the foliage of the garden. And when the light of heaven is fading from a ruined world, and the time is near that the scenery of Eden is to be wrapped in night, they stand before God guilty, trembling, wretched. The great gulf of separation is already opened. Their subsequent exile from Paradise was typical of man's unworthiness of himself to come before the presence of the highest, or to bow before a holy God.

The impression and influence of this fact, are traceable in the subsequent history and proceedings of mankind, great as might be the ignorance and corruption into which the human race had fallen. In the records of almost every people, we find marks of a priesthood as existing, and of sacrifices as being offered,—the latter, not unfrequently, of a most costly description. Nor do Christians need to be informed that when this rite was devoutly and intelligently performed, it was observed in compliance with the divine command, and had reference to the sacrifice ultimately consummated upon Calvary. It was a means intended to foreshadow the great atonement that was to be presented in the fulness of time. It pointed to the period when an infinitely nobler victim should be slain; who "by one offering should for ever perfect them that are sanctified." The observances of old might often be performed in ignorance and blindness. Under a dread of the divine displeasure, hecatombs of victims might be sacrificed; labouring under the sense of guilt, oppressed by the influence of a gloomy superstition, not unfrequently have altars been stained in Pagan lands even with the blood of human victims. All this, however, was a perversion of the truth, while it bore testimony to the deep and indelible sense of guilt abiding on the mind of man, and to his persuasion that some gift was needed, and some sacrifice required, ere the wrath of the divinity could be considered as appeased.

This fact, the institutes and observances of the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations were especially intended and adapted to illustrate. These were "shadows of better things to come." When, accordingly, the offerer laid his hand upon the victim's head before it was pierced, and the body consigned to the flames—this was meant to illustrate the great and comforting truth of *substitution*—of guilt transferred from the offending to the innocent—of the burden of iniquity laid upon one who was set apart and chosen for that purpose. So, in course of the solemn procedure of the great day of atonement—that whereon, carrying the blood with him—the Jewish High Priest alone entered the holy of holies. When, on *that* day the

scapegoat was sent by the hands of a fit person to the wilderness, an emblem was offered of the full and complete deliverance of the penitent and contrite; of the burial of offences, and the carrying of them away into a land of forgetfulness for ever. When, at an earlier period, the morning of deliverance dawned on Israel after a night in which the divine vengeance had visited every home of their oppressors, it was shewn in the protection and security of the families of the chosen people, that the "angel of the Lord encampeth around them that fear him;" that they who apply in faith to "the blood of sprinkling," which the text calls to our remembrance, shall be safely shielded from harm, when the divine anger visits others with the retribution due to their offences. But on such emblems, however graphic, we cannot dwell. Here our attention is called to the reality. The text bids us "contemplate our great High Priest," even "Jesus, the son of God. From the fact that when Jesus "bowed his head and gave up the ghost," he did so in a peculiar and distinguishing capacity and relationship, the "decease that was accomplished at Jerusalem," appears under an aspect of *unspeakable importance* to all who are desirous of deliverance from eternal death. Precious was the testimony borne by Christ to the greatness of the Father, and his claims on human love and reverence; full of power and truth was what Jesus said; illustrious the beauty of his example and the consistency of his demeanour; but his atoning death *pre-eminently* marks him out as the benefactor and the friend. On a reference to scripture, this truth is exhibited in its full consequence. It is spoken of as the great remedial means desired, as the effectual help provided in the counsels of eternity, for the salvation of a multitude whom none can number; as the fullest and most clear manifestation of the great Jehovah to his subjects, as a God of mercy and compassion; providing a redemption suited to their circumstances and wants; proffering for the acceptance of faith, a righteousness and obedience entirely spotless, and thus "speaking peace" to the troubled mind and the distracted conscience. Hence, we can direct the view of the sin-burdened trembler to one who "died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God." Hence, in answer to the apprehensions of the doubting and uncertain, we can speak of Christ as having "finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness." Hence, when we are called upon to rebuke the unhumbled, obdurate, and proud—when meeting with those who take pleasure in iniquity and mock at sin—we may deduce a most forcible exhortation against impenitence, and a motive to alarm

from the cross on which Jesus died; as exhibiting in his endurance God's burning indignation against evil, and testifying how serious the consequences must prove, of rejecting the proposals of forgiveness, and of refusing to listen to that voice by which men are addressed in an utterance combining at once authority and love.

The importance, in this point of view, of the death of the Lord Jesus, is amply and expressively dwelt upon in Scripture. *There* we are told that He was "stricken for the offences" of the people; that these were "made to meet on Him," and that He bore "the chastisement of their peace." *Such* a task *no* created being was able to sustain; but in Jesus the requisite conditions were fulfilled which enabled Him to act as *surety* of the fallen. The dignity of the divine, and the capacity for suffering in the human nature, were in Him united; acceptance in the sight of God, with requisite compassion and sympathy for men. Hence, He stooped from His throne of glory to work out a rescue and provide for their deliverance, even by His toils, agony, and blood. Surely, therefore, unto *Him* this day's celebration is appropriate.—The text farther reminds us of the truth of what Christ had previously declared—His self-command: "I have power to lay down life, and to take it again." *This* is a fact of much importance—since thus He was able to present a sufficient sacrifice; in keeping with which, it is said by the evangelist, that "He *gave* up the ghost." *That*, however, could be alleged of *no* son of Adam; for, on departing from this world, each of them at the precise time fixed, obeyed the Omnipotent's behest. But the Lord Jesus *chose* to die; placed Himself in a situation that admitted of His undergoing this condition of humanity; after having rendered, as the representative of His people, perfect obedience to the law in their room and stead. At the period mentioned in the text this purpose was accomplished, and the great work was "*finished*" which He had come into the world to do. On *Him* justice could assert no farther claim. Already, as an earnest of the future, and in the depth of His humiliation, He had afforded on the cross an evidence of forgiving power. Now He was ready to commend His Spirit to *that* Father, the temporary averting of whose countenance had recently caused Him such anxiety and grief. Accordingly, we are told, "He bowed His head, and gave up the ghost." The sufferings endured by the Son of Man were ended, and His Spirit was at rest. At *that* hour, the ascendancy of evil was overthrown; the empire of superstition was tottering to its fall. The predicted day had come, when Messiah should "be cut off, but not for Himself." The great propitiation was com-

pleted; full redemption was "brought in;" the remission of sins had been purchased by the shedding of *His* blood, who "gave Himself a ransom." "It is finished." Jesus, therefore, at this epoch, "bowed His head, and gave up the ghost."

Admitting that the Lord Jesus died—not as the mere victim of popular animosity, but as an atoning sacrifice, some circumstances that might otherwise have seemed mysterious are accounted for. Instead of the multitude of oblations offered from age to age, having been but a prodigal expenditure of suffering and bloodshed, only calculated to inspire gloomy ideas regarding Him who called for such gifts upon the part of man; these appear to have been intended and adapted to *cheer* those who must otherwise have been dejected and forlorn—through the continued intimation of a great Deliverer, by whom the "head of the serpent" should be bruised." From this, too, arises an explanation of what might be thought of as the burdensome instructions and minute directions of the Levitical economy; which are to be viewed as adapted for the use of a peculiar people, who were intended to be instrumental in keeping alive upon earth the faith and knowledge of the Highest. They are also to be considered as a provision designed by divine wisdom for the instruction of future ages. Instead, then, of wondering that One who had often exhibited the possession of superhuman power, and to whom testimony from on high had so repeatedly been borne—should have been permitted to expire by an ignominious death; while we own that the magnitude of this love surpasses full knowledge and comprehension; we trace in the event, the accomplishment and evolution of the great plan of heaven. We see in it what magnifies the divine perfections. We see what urges by the strongest claims to gratitude and submission; as exhibiting the wondrous truth, that "when we were without strength, Christ died for the ungodly," and gave Himself as "an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour unto God."

II. The event spoken of in the text is to be viewed as attesting the Mission and Messiahship of Christ.

The event was predicted long before it took place, and was brought to pass in a manner clearly shewing a divine appointment. Many circumstances, most unlikely to be conjoined, required to happen in order to its being fulfilled. Was it to be supposed that the Jews, who expected blessings so lofty from the coming of Christ, would, when He appeared—reject His doctrine, revile His person, and demand that He should be put to death? These particulars, however,

had been predicted; and not one of them failed of being accomplished. It is utterly impossible to find ground for the pretext of imposture or mistake. The divinity of Jesus is most amply attested. Signs were done by Him which could not have been performed, unless, in the words of Nicodemus, "God were with Him." Who but a person invested with a divine commission could perform such miracles—which were wrought before witnesses hostile to His claims and prepossessed against His doctrines? Or, *would* the testimony of heaven be given in favour of imposture? When, moreover, the doctrines taught were of the most pure, exalted, and spiritual nature, *can* it be conceived that any one, not thoroughly convinced of their truth, would have promulgated them? Unless, too, they were in accordance with the mind and the will of God, would they, under such unfavourable circumstances, have established a firm hold upon the minds of men, and have led to such conspicuous results? How unlikely was it, that a system of belief so opposed to the desires and prepossessions of mankind, would have gained ground through such instrumentality as was employed; or that the attempt would succeed to adduce in support of error such a system of credentials. *How* could predictions so numerous, minute, nay, in not a few instances, apparently contradictory, be harmonized? We may notice this, more particularly, with reference to the event spoken of—the manner of Christ's death, as foretold in ancient prophecy. This involved the departure of the sceptre from Judah, which actually had occurred. His hands and feet were to be pierced, His "vesture to be parted," and *this* was fulfilled at the period of the crucifixion. He should be "despised and rejected of men,"—"a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" yet "the Gentiles should come to His light," and "kings to the brightness of His rising." While His countrymen clamoured for His death—and *that* death was brought about, not by a Jewish but a Roman method of inflicting condign punishment; at the time when He expired, unequivocal evidence was given of the grandeur and importance of the event that had occurred. There were signs in heaven and signs on earth. At the appointed time He rose from the dead, in proof that the efforts of enemies were vain, and that His sacrifice was accepted. Crucified, accordingly, in weakness and shame, He was raised in dignity. His kingdom is destined to outlast every other; and "of the increase of His power and authority there shall be no end." In answer to every cavil, we have abundant reason for concluding of Christ's death, that it was *that* of the Lamb of God. This, then, was the peculiar and unparalleled instance of

devotedness; for He who so expired was God's own Son. The particulars that led to it had been specified; His betrayal by a false disciple, the amount by which that treachery was recompensed, and His numbering with transgressors. Amidst the shame of the cross too, His majesty and greatness were still apparent,—resignation towards God, with benevolence and good will to men. He is "led as a lamb to the slaughter—and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth." Vain, but for this, had been the malice and subtlety of His foes. Not a design they harboured but was known to Him. In the exercise of Omnipotence He could have stayed the coming of the "hour;" but the human race must in that case have been left to perish. To His Omniscient mind the devices and plans adopted were fully known—as their violence might have been baffled. In the exercise, however, of love and pity, He who shall be hereafter manifest as Judge, and in *that* capacity be attended by the hosts of heaven—consented to be impeached before the tribunal of His creatures; standing there an object of reviling and hatred, He was sentenced to death, even the accursed death of the cross; He "bowed His head and gave up the ghost," and sealing His testimony with His blood, rendered up His soul to *Him* that judgeth righteously. Viewing the event in the light of Scripture, considering the emergency that called for it, and the consequences by which it has been followed, are we not constrained to admit, that *here* is an occurrence most consolatory to His people, as it *ought* to be alarming to His foes? that *thus* God declared His love toward us, in that while we were sinners, Christ died for us, to satisfy the claims of a broken law, and permit the divine mercy to be freely, fully, and effectually displayed.

III. The event spoken of in the text will be found to have had a most decided influence on the position and prospects of mankind, and it was speedily followed by glory and triumph.

When we reflect upon the multitudes who have founded on the sacrificial and atoning death of Christ, their prospects in time and their hopes with reference to eternity; when we think that thus the barrier which opposed the sinner's approach to Him who is all purity and light has been removed; and remember that in consequence of it God has condescended to treat with men, "waiting to be gracious," and that the indispensable influences of the Spirit are communicated; that "mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have embraced each other;" surely we must admit that it *ought* to be regarded as fraught with the most signal bless-

ings to His people. It is adapted to turn them from the love and practice of iniquity, and to overcome the enmity of the carnal heart and disobedient mind. *This*, then, has been adequate to remove despondency and fear, and it has animated with a hope that is unspeakable and full of glory. It prepared a way for the progress and triumph of righteousness and peace by the reception of the truth. It is adapted directly to promote the human welfare. Were but the authority of God duly recognized, and the empire of Christ submitted to, the evils and vices that oppress mankind would disappear; and this earth would assume the aspect of "a field which the Lord hath blessed." Far more effectually than the enactments of civil authority, does the benignant influence of Him who sways the sceptre over each of the regenerate, quell the outbreaks of human passion, and check the ruinous propensities of the apostate nature. From Jerusalem, then, His law may be spoken of as having gone forth; nor shall it fail at last in emancipating the people of every land from bondage to corruption, and in filling the whole earth with the knowledge of the Lord.

Of this future success, *more* than an earnest has already been afforded. The event we are this day proposing to commemorate—the scene which the text recalls—exhibits "Jesus, the Lamb of God" as enduring the chastisement due to the offences of as many as believe in him, preparatory to bursting the bonds of death, and binding in captivity his own and his people's foes. His birth had been comparatively unnoticed; his life seemed to have greatly failed of its effect so far as regarded a disobedient and a gainsaying people. His *associates* were few, and these of lowly origin, and comparatively uninstructed minds; His death was that apparently of one mingled with the common fate. There might seem little to justify the glowing pictures of a conquering Messiah; there was little to captivate the taste of those who were held in bondage by "the God of this world." But when the efforts of enemies might seem to be successful—in reality they contributed to accomplish the divine will and pleasure. That sinking form is upheld by no created arm; that scorned sufferer is the same that the vision of the seer represented as clothed in garments dipped in blood, "as red in his apparel," as advancing from a scene of conquest, in which foes lay prostrate at His feet, and slain by His victorious arm. When Jesus "bowed his head and gave up the ghost," the empire of Satan was overthrown—the abasement of Messiah ended, and his victory was secured. When he said, "It is finished," he did so in the retrospect of a work that was

completed. Nothing farther on his part remained to be accomplished. The sacrifice appointed before the foundation of the world, and typified by the sacrifices of the law, had been offered and accepted. At *that* time, when a pall of darkness veiled the sunbeams, when the rocks were rent, the earth quaked, and the wonted covering of the holy place was violently withdrawn; when "Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit,"—the mightiest incident took place that can affect humanity for good or evil. "Crucified in weakness," the Redeemer is now "exalted in power," and "he is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." With this, His temporary abatement closed: henceforth he became invested with "all power in heaven and on earth." The enterprise was fraught with the *most* momentous issues. *Before* "darkness was on the earth" and brooded over the people, the sway of evil and the ascendancy of sin were well-nigh absolute; but when Jesus died upon the cross, that ascendancy was overthrown—*that* triumph was ensured, in which "all flesh shall together see his glory;" that period was made sure to come when there "shall be nothing to hurt or offend in all God's holy mountain," when righteousness shall prevail and evil cease.

Finally, the event spoken of in the text, while affording a ground for the Christian's peace and joy, is directly fitted to teach him salutary lessons. Thus was appropriately consummated, the one complete and spotless example of holiness furnished to the world. Mark then the demeanour of the Son of God at that hour, still filled with zeal for the honour of the Father—cherishing the most enlarged desires for the welfare of mankind, yet careful of all the claims of more immediate duty—speaking comfort to the penitent associate of His doom—spending almost His last breath in prayer, and careful of her who had been appointed as the guardian of His childhood. Piety and benevolence shine in Him with the brightest lustre, and in this, as in other respects, He has left us an example that we should follow in His steps."

Yet it is affecting to think that by many the grandeur of His character and the value of His sufferings are little known; that while they may read the annals of His life, or hear the truths of the gospel dwelt upon, they fail to consider aright the obligations which are due to Him, as "the Redeemer of God's elect." To *them* His death has been hitherto in vain, and by them His authority is despised. But how tremendous must *that* vengeance be which could

only, by such instrumentality, be averted! how fearful is that wrath which must be poured on the ungodly to the uttermost! It is love incensed—it is patience wearied by delay. Man, indeed, is the *only* being throughout the universe—we have reason to think—unaffected by this record. Loftier intelligences proffer to Christ the homage of their love; the very regions of despair are moved; evil spirits "believe and tremble;" but they who will not now have Him "to reign over them," must count upon meeting hereafter with the due retribution of their deeds.

It is, however, with different feelings that His people will look forward to the engaging in *that* solemnity, which has for its appropriate purpose, the celebration of His obedience unto death, and the showing forth of that event with which are connected their holiest purposes and highest hopes. As servants of Him who came "to fulfil all righteousness," as having listened to His engaging voice who has called upon sinners to approach Him—as seeking to acquire resemblance to His character—as pledged to a warfare against "the devil, the world, and the flesh;" as conscious of inherent weakness, yet as coveting to be made through Him "more than conquerors;" such a tribute is called for, and such an engagement, if rightly entered into, cannot but be profitable. In the breaking of the bread, they behold an emblem of His sufferings, calculated to suggest the reason and the cause of these; while the cup of communion, likewise, is adapted to impress upon the memory and the heart, not only that His blood "cleanseth from all sin," but that it is meant to wash them from the stains of that pollution, which is dishonouring to God, and at variance with the great purpose of the gospel. Wherefore, brethren, in the prospect of doing so, devoutly consider the "great apostle and high priest of our profession," remembering that He "gave himself for us to redeem us from iniquity, and to purify a peculiar people" to himself, who should be "zealous of good works." Examine whether you are really his followers, having in you "the same mind;" and while the retrospect of the past may be abundantly fitted to suggest ground of sorrow and abasement; let this endear to your thoughts the memory of your Saviour's death, and lead you anew to wash in that "fountain which has been opened for sin and for uncleanness." Above all, my friends, in these days of easy profession, the grand question is to be considered—"Are we members of Christ's body?" for it is nothing to be so reputed among men, if there be not kindred affection and loving devoted allegiance to the Saviour. This is the proof of the genuineness of profession; the

evidence of fitness to sit at the table of the Lord. It is, however, as to its temper, begun in this world; for they that are Christ's are crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts; and if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things have passed away, and all things have become new. May God bless His word, and to His name be praise. Amen.

Prayer.

Almighty and most gracious God! be pleased to accompany with Thy rich blessing the instruction that has been given from Thy Word, and the several exercises of devotion in which we have joined. We bless Thee that Christ Jesus has appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; has finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in an everlasting righteousness; has fully satisfied the claims of justice, and is now exalted a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and the remission of sins. May we take Him as our Saviour, and truly desire to honour His name.

Forbid that it should be to the condemnation of any of us that we refused to hear His voice, to concur with His invitations, or to follow His example. Send forth, we beseech Thee, Thy light and truth, that we may be led and guided into all truth; and may others take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, and have contemplated with profit, alike the holy consistency of His life, and the meritorious influence of His death, who gave himself for us to redeem us from iniquity, and to purify a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

During the solemn service in which we are about to engage, do Thou lift upon us the light of Thy reconciled countenance. Deal not with us after our sins, nor reward us as our iniquities have deserved. Be very gracious to all who this day intend to commemorate the Redeemer's death, by sitting down at a communion table, and partaking of the bread and wine which represent His broken body and poured out blood.

Hear our prayers, we beseech Thee, O Lord, and pardon our sins. Accept of our persons and services, for Christ Jesus' sake. Amen.

Communion Service.

After the singing of another psalm or paraphrase, the presiding minister commences the communion service by giving an introductory address, technically called the "*Fencing of the Tables*," the object of which is, in a plain, simple, and affectionate manner, to indicate the qualifications of which communicants ought to be possessed, and the feelings and desires by which they should be animated. From a variety of such addresses, we give the following as a specimen :—

Address before Communion.

My professing Christian friends, let me direct your attention to the words of the institution of the holy supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they are delivered by His servant and apostle, St. Paul.—1 Cor. xi. 23-30.

"For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you. That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread:

"And when He had given thanks, He brake it and said, Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me.

"After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in My blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.

"For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till He come.

"Therefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup.

"For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body."

The object of approach to the table is, that you may commemorate the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, celebrating the great atonement which He made on the cross, and entering anew with Him into a covenant of love, gratitude, and obedience. The act is in compliance with an express command of the Redeemer. It was addressed in the first instance, exclusively to His disciples, for these alone were

present; and it still applies not to such as are careless and lukewarm regarding their spiritual interests, or who are averse to any of His precepts and injunctions. Christ demands the homage of the heart. Free as air are the proclamations of the gospel: its sound may be spoken of as going forth from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. It has a voice for all time, and for those living the most distant from us, and in various places of abode. The Greenlander has heard it amidst his long night and polar snows. The slaves of superstition has been weaned by it, from the worship of idols to serve the living God. The worshipper of Brahma or of Boodh; the most degraded as well as the lettered and polished; the decorous as to external conduct, as well as the almost outcast from human society, are known to have been reclaimed by it to usefulness, to comfort, and to God. But then, they *were* reclaimed, the gospel coming to them not "in word only, but in demonstration of the spirit, and with power." It arrested Paul. It has brought the Magdalene with genuine tears, to sit, as it were at Jesus' feet. It has softened the heart of the proud and worldly man, addicted to to earth's frivolities alone, or immersed among its cares; and could we number up the instances of conversion and renewal that have taken place since "the word of the Lord went forth from Jerusalem," we should be reminded of the scene described by Ezekiel, when the "spirit of the Lord" breathed effectually on the vast field, displaying the relics of carnage as descried by his prophetic glance—"bone coming again to bone, sinews binding, skin covering, and a host starting up," an exceeding great army. Such, collectively considered, is the triumph that has been won by the Prince of Peace. Innumerable trophies have been obtained of His victory over death and hell—abundant evidence afforded of the outpouring and communication of the Holy Spirit. Very varied as to original derivation, shall be the component members of that multitude, "without number," described in the book of Revelation, as "standing before the throne of God," attired in white raiment, bearing the symbol of triumph, and with concurrent voice raising the lofty chorus of adoration in honour of Him, "the Lamb once slain," but who is now "alive for evermore, and who bears the keys of hell and of death," all of whom acquired on earth an interest in Christ's sacrifice, and were objects of His love.

Let those who this day design to sit at His table, attend carefully to the solemn import and binding nature of the transaction, remembering that "God searcheth the heart, and trieth the reins of the

children of men;" that he cannot be deceived by a vain oblation; and that so far as regards practical benefit to be derived from the ordinance, the avoiding of guilt, and the prospect of acceptance, all may be said to hinge upon questions such as these:—Do we know Christ, and love Christ? Are we truly penitent on account of sin? Have we begun to walk with Christ in newness of life? Have we dedicated ourselves wholly and heartily to his service?

But let us view the matter for a moment or two according to the light of express scripture statements; and may God vouchsafe to us all, counsel, sound wisdom, and understanding! Observe then what is said in the 15th Psalm.

Lord, who shall abide in Thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?

He that walketh uprightly, worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.

He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.

In whose eyes a vile person is contemned: but he honoureth them that fear the Lord.

Again, in St. Matthew v. 3-10, there is mention made of a variety of features that are characteristic of the friends and followers of Jesus and which it is incumbent upon every one of them to cultivate.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

But there are other statements more condensed, and not less explicit, which may serve to guide us in the enquiry, such as these—

"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

"They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts."

"There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.

" If any man be in Christ," (and out of Christ he continues exposed to wrath and condemnation), " he is a new creature. Behold old things are passed away, and all things are become new."

Sayings such as these, my friends, very decidedly inform us of the character and disposition of those who are worthy to sit down at the Lord's table. Are you meek, merciful, forgiving—seeking to be "pure in heart," and hungering and thirsting after righteousness? Have you become changed characters, and are your hearts " touched as with a live coal from off the altar? " Is it really your desire to live in Christ, for Christ, with Christ, and would you, on no account whatever, knowingly and deliberately—of set purpose—break His reasonable injunctions? Do you give to God the first place in your hearts, allowing no idol to occupy the soul, be it the love of lust or gain, or confidence in your fancied wisdom? Do you recoil from the impiety of taking His name in vain? Do you stand nobly and resolutely out in refusing to buy or sell upon His day? Are you honestly desirous to fulfil in God's sight, and as he bids you, the relative and social duties? Do you avoid the unclean thought as well as the impure action? In fine, are you desirous of glorifying God in your body and spirit which are His? Can you declare with Joshua, " as for me and my house, we will serve the the Lord?" Then do we invite you to this feast of love to be held in remembrance of *Jesus:* Who assumed our nature: bore for us the wrath of God from the beginning of His incarnation to the end of His life on earth, especially in the garden and on the cross: who suffered innumerable revilings, that we might not be brought to shame; was, in innocence, condemned to death, that we might be acquitted at the judgment seat: who suffered His blessed body to be nailed to the cross, that he might fasten thereon the handwriting of our sins; who took on Him the burden of our curse, that he might fill us with His blessings; who exclaimed, " my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? " that we might be made nigh to God and never be forsaken of Him: who confirmed, with His death, and with the shedding of His blood, the covenant of grace and reconciliation, when He said " It is finished."

Let us, therefore, with humble hearts, bow ourselves before Him, and with true faith implore His grace, and may our communion be in truth with the Father, with the Son, and with the Holy Ghost. Amen.

At the close of this address, the minister gives out another psalm or paraphrase to be sung: most appropriately, the 35th

paraphrase is often used on such occasions, and he intimates, before the singing commences, that while it proceeds, the elders will bring forward the elements of communion. These being arranged properly on the table, the presiding minister leaves the pulpit and takes his place at the head of it. He then anew offers up prayer for a blessing upon the ordinance.

Prayer before Communion.

O Lord, Thou art a Spirit, and we ask Thee to enable us to worship Thee in spirit and in truth. Call in our wandering thoughts, invigorate our feeble affections, and let our minds be centred upon that love which passeth knowledge, and which has been exhibited and made known to man by Him who came into the world that He might seek and save that which was lost.

Thou art, O Lord, the fountain of excellence and perfection: the God by whom all things are sustained—the Holy One of Israel, before whom the angels that retained their purity, veil their faces with their wings, ceasing not to cry, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty! just and true are all Thy ways, O Thou King of Saints!

Possessed of every perfection, Thou stoodest not in need of the service of creatures, but Thou didst form them to reflect Thy glory, to shew forth Thy praise, and bear testimony to the wisdom and compassion of Him with whom we have to do.

We bless Thee that when man had sinned, Thou didst not leave him to perish in despair, without the offer of forgiveness, but that when the fulness of the time had come, didst send forth Thy Son, made of a woman, made under the law, that he might magnify its claims and bring in an everlasting righteousness; that mercy and truth have met together; that righteousness and peace have embraced each other; that thus pardon is offered to the chief of sinners, a door of hope has been opened to the penitent offender, and a ransom provided for the most unworthy.

Eternal thanks be unto Him who came in the name of the Lord to save us; who, prosecuting his errand of love, was born of woman, and illustrated among men the purity and rectitude of obedience; who humbled himself, was set at nought of men, and despised of the people; who endured the hiding of the Father's countenance; was agonised in Gethsemane, and died on Calvary, bearing the weight of the iniquities of His people, and at last bowing his anointed head, gave up the ghost. Bless the Lord, O our souls, and forget not all

His benefits, who forgiveth our iniquities, healeth our diseases, and crowneth us with loving kindness and tender mercies.

We thank Thee, heavenly Father, for that sacred feast which Jesus instituted the same night on which He was betrayed, to commemorate the decease which was accomplished at Jerusalem. May the bread which we break be the communion of the body of Christ, and the wine which is poured out be the communion of the blood of Christ. Give to each who would approach the table the preparation of the heart. May we look to Christ with faith and love. Be gracious to all intending communicants, and inspire us with stedfast desire after new obedience, that feeling we are laid under solemn obligations to Him who loved and gave Himself for us, we may seek to glorify the name of Christ, may advocate His cause, and may adorn the doctrine that is according to godliness by a suitable deportment.

Bow the heavens, O Lord! Come down and fill this place with Thy glory. May we feel that it is good for us to be here. Having come into the banqueting house, let Thy banner over us be love.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit! three Persons and one God, deal graciously with Thy servants, and bless this ordinance for our spiritual nourishment and gorwth in grace, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, our strength and Redeemer. Amen.

First Table Service.

Before Communicating.

You have now come to observe that ordinance which Jesus ordained to signify His dying love and represent his sufferings; have seated yourselves at the Lord's Table to receive the seals of his unchanging love; to profess that you belong to that glorious and blessed family, whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, that you would be associated with the righteous on earth, and desire to reach their inheritance in heaven.

When you would contemplate the death of Christ, how varied are the themes that may be presented for contemplation! Looking at the cross, we behold prophecy fulfilled—the most illustrious example of suffering virtue—the slaying of the Lamb ordained from before the foundation of the world. Think then of the *glory* which Christ had with the Father before the world was—traces of which were abundantly discernible during the time that he sojourned on earth. At his birth, a chorus of angels—a multitude of the heavenly host—lifted up their voices, though but in the hearing of a few humble shepherds, the splendour of their appearance lighting up the sky,—

proclaiming "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will to the children of men." At His *baptism* on the banks of Jordan the heavens were opened, the Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove, and the Almighty Father's voice declared, "*This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.*" On the mount of *transfiguration* His face shone as the sun, and His raiments were white as light, while *Moses*, the great lawgiver of the Jews, and *Elijah*, as representative of the prophets were seen with him, conversing regarding the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. While *carrying on his work*, grace was "poured into his lips," and he was fairer than the children of men." His words were accompanied with power. He touched the sightless eyeballs, and the faculty of vision was restored. He spake: waves were quelled, the tempest ceased, the sick were healed, the dead became alive; nay, even when he hung in agony on the cross, amidst the mockeries of a jeering crowd, who had bent the knee to him in scorn, and, unconsciously fulfilling the divine will, had called for his crucifixion; when he consented to expire by the death usually allotted to the criminal and the slave, wondrous signs bore witness to his dignity; the sun was darkened, the earth shook, the rocks were rent, and the centurion who presided over the soldiers exclaimed, "Truly this was the Son of God." Reflect farther on the *glory* that shone around Him, when the morning of the third day witnessed an empty sepulchre, and he rose from the tomb, as the conqueror of sin and death, in the splendour and dignity of his ascension; when his feet left the Mount of Olives, and he visibly ascended up on high, till a cloud covered Him from the view of the disciples; and on the magnificence of His *second coming*, when he shall appear in the glory of His Father and with the holy angels, no longer in weakness and humiliation, but exalted in power and majesty. This, communicants, is the exalted and generous Friend, whose dying love you are professing to commemorate.

From the height of His glory, turn now to *the depth of His humiliation, condescension, and sufferings.* When Jesus came, there were few outward marks of splendour. He was born in a stable, cradled in a manger, His early life was passed in obscurity, and when His public ministry began, His name was cast out as evil by his countrymen, and the most obnoxious and unfounded calumnies circulated. Behold Him pursued with unwearied hatred, his miracles ascribed to the power of the evil one, His soul saddened by the contemplation of human guilt and infatuation, subjected to an usage that had been unnatural in the case of the worst of criminals, so that "He gave His back to the

smiters, His cheek to them that pulled off the hair, hiding not His face from shame and spitting;" His sacred temples wounded by the crown of thorns—His hands and feet pierced by the nails—His whole body suspended in excruciating agony on the cross. Think of the *assault of malignant spirits*, and of the power of darkness—of the unutterable sufferings of His holy soul; when terror and sorrow took hold upon Him, and He was deprived for a time of the sense of His Father's love. Who can express His *grief* when He exclaimed, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death?"—when in the garden of Gethsemane, He fell to the ground and prayed, O my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me;" or when He exclaimed upon the cross, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Well might He appropriate the language of the prophet, and say, "Behold and see, all ye that pass by, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of His fierce anger." Yes, communicants, never was sorrow like to this—never did love abound like the love of Him who gave His life a ransom for many, to gather you to himself, bring you to God, and make you members of the household of faith and "fellow-citizens of the saints." With what wonder and gratitude should His love inspire those who were once as "sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and bishop of souls." If ye are joined to Him by covenant, how natural and congenial should this observance be. Trusting then, that you cherish to God filial affection, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is the object of your homage and adoration, I proceed to put into your hands the symbols of that body which was broken, and of that blood which was shed on your account.

"On that night in which our blessed Lord was betrayed, He took bread, and when He had blessed, He brake it, and gave it to the disciples, saying, Take eat: This is my body which is broken for you. In like manner also after supper, He took the cup, and when He had blessed, He gave it to the disciples, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, shed for the remission of the sins of many, Drink ye all of it. For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death until He come."

After Communicating.

"We have thought of Thy loving kindness O Lord, in the midst of Thy temple." Whether you trace this back to its source, view the manner in which it has been manifested, or the happy and last-

ing results that proceed from it, there is abundant cause for gratitude and praise. How blessed is the condition of believers! "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath you are the everlasting arms." "The Lord God is a sun and shield; He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will be withheld from any that do walk uprightly." "Happy art Thou, O Israel, who is like unto Thee, O people, saved by the Lord, who is the *shield of thy help*, and *the glory of thine excellency*." "The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore."

Promises such as these, communicants, are ample and inspiriting, but they are the property only of those who have heartily yielded themselves to the service of the Almighty. To assume the aspect of profession is an easy matter. To acquire a certain amount of knowledge regarding the contents of Scripture—to be familiar with the events in the history of our blessed Lord—to be able, in general terms, to state the method of salvation—is by no means difficult. But the profession of outward actions is of no value, if it be unaccompanied by sincerity of heart, by renewedness of mind, and the earnest aim to adorn the doctrine of God your Saviour in all things. As water can rise no higher than its source, so, derived of the anointing spirit of Christian love, the heart untouched as by a "live coal from off the altar,"—all is but as sounding brass, and a tinkling symbol," the motion of an automaton rather than of a sentient being, —the raising of an altar on which no acceptable sacrifice is laid—the form of godliness while the reality and power are wanting.

But we trust, communicants, that it is otherwise with you—that you are "called, chosen, and faithful," sealed to the day of everlasting redemption, so that to you we may apply, the words of the Redeemer spoken originally to His diciples, "Ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you begin, and your hearts shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." Then may you rejoice in His triumph over death—in His glorious resurrection from the tomb—and in the assurance that He has risen as the "first fruits of them that sleep." You may rejoice in thought as you accompany the apostles unto Bethany, and see Him ascend to "His Father and your Father—to His God and your God." You can rejoice in the triumphs of His Gospel, which has enriched so many nations and sur-

vived so many changes, in the number of His elect that have already been gathered in, and in the prediction of a countless multitude that shall for ever celebrate his praises; and you may rejoice also with unfeigned humility and deepest gratitude that you have been "plucked as brands from the burning"—that a title has been given you to the blessings of His purchase, the power of God, and the privileges of His children, the spirit of sanctification, peace of conscience, advancement in holiness, perseverance in grace, the hope of a blessed resurrection, and the animating prospect of a glorious eternity.

But the expression "ye now therefore have sorrow, and I will see you again," implies that imperfection cleaves to your present state. Be up and doing. "Quit you like men! be strong." Enter often into His presence-chamber, and "bring forth fruits meet for repentance." "Lay hold on the strength of Him that is Almighty." You have seen the child—his unsteady footsteps guided by a father's or a mother's hand,—it is an emblem of the believer's weakness and of God's sufficiency. What would be thought of the heir to a kingdom if he betrayed a grovelling propensity? You are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ;" and what have you any more to do with idols?" "Pass," then, "the time of your sojourning here in fear," walking as "children of the light and of the day;" and "have your conversation in heaven, whence also you look for the Saviour, who shall change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body, according to the working, whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Go in peace, and may the God of love and peace be with you.

Second Table Service.

BEFORE COMMUNICATING.

In obedience to the command of the Lord Jesus you have sat down at His table—that you may declare your attachment to His cause, your reliance on His merits for pardon and acceptance, and your grateful remembrance of Him as the Lord of glory, who stooped from His place in heaven to dwell with men upon the earth; who, compassionating our weakness, exposed Himself to abasement, sorrow, suffering, and shame, that He might procure your deliverance, and work out your salvation.

On what principle they who are ignorant of, or who refuse to recognise His glory, can explain such an act, it is difficult to imagine. Apart from the consideration of His atoning death as a sacrifice and propitiation through faith in His blood—on the supposition that re-

pentance is enough to reinstate man in the favour of the Almighty, that decease which you are to commemorate would have been superfluous. Had the Lord Jesus come merely to set mankind an example of virtuous action and resignation to suffering, our service this day would be but creature-worship.

You, however, have learned to contemplate the subject in another and far nobler point of view. You feel that this is at once a solemn and a delightful exercise. You recognise in Him the Messiah promised to the fathers, the woman's seed, the Almighty Friend, the illustrious Conqueror. You bear in mind that this Exalted One—"the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth," was possessor of heaven's riches, ruler of the universe, and adored by the angelic hosts. *This* ordinance presents Him as instructing and caring for that Church, whose members He has, by the shedding of His blood, redeemed, and over whose interests He will not fail to watch. Every century since the beginning of the world has testified to His care; and the ages yet to come will continue to bear witness to His praise: for He is the angel of the covenant, the King and Head of His Church, the Intercessor within the veil. To Him has been given "all power in heaven and on earth;" and by His word and Spirit, He is carrying on that plan of grace which redounds to the divine honour, and will result in the salvation of a "multitude that none can number."

"How great is His goodness!" The redemption of His people was ever presented to His mind, and at how great a cost to Him was it obtained! From riches He stooped to poverty; from happiness to the curse; and from glory to the depth of shame. Peculiarly dear to Him was the Father's love; yet His anger Christ was for a season contented to bear; and thus did He express His sense of it, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Contemplate Him, then, in ignominy and agony! The horror of that darkness who is able to conceive? The loneliness of that desertion who can comprehend?

How great is the measure in which His goodness has abounded! He gives pardon to the chief of sinners, adoption to the children of wrath, liberty to the captive, treasure to the needy, light to the blind, joy to the sorrowful, and beauties of holiness to the depraved. He "resteth in his love," for His gracious purposes will not fail of their full accomplishment. Behold, then, Jesus "the Lamb of God," who loved you and gave Himself for you; and through the memorials of which you are to partake, let what He endured be vividly re-

called, and let the recollection be precious of that sacrifice which He offered, that divine justice might be satisfied and sinners be reconciled to God.

AFTER COMMUNICATING.

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows unto the Lord, in the presence of his people." This, you now have done; and most appropriate was the act on the part of those who must ascribe to the Lord Jesus the pardon of their transgressions, the mercy they have experienced, their deliverance from eternal death, and their hope of an inheritance of glory.

But the act which you have now performed is not sufficient by itself. It may give the appearance of discipleship, and even be attended by inward joy and comfort. But, *by* itself, it is only an outward badge. You must, accordingly, be prepared to justify that profession in your daily life. In having intercourse with the world, you are to "bear about in the body" a salutary and precious remembrance of the death of Christ, and of the purposes it is intended to accomplish; to show that you have imbibed His Spirit, and to make it your aim to follow more fully His example. Let not, therefore, your affections cool, your energy decline, or your hope grow languid. "Ye are my friends," He says, "if ye do whatsoever I command you." "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers." How true should this be! Whatever would lead you from Christ, and diminish your affection for Him, must be hostile to your comfort, well-being, and peace. But the goodness that cared for you when lost, the love that plucked you from everlasting burnings, that has provided so ample and satisfying a portion, and left upon record such exalted promises, *ought* not to be forgotten. Let reflection on it keep you amidst the intercourse and temptations of the world. Let it be often recalled in your meditations, and lead you frequently to a throne of grace, there to express wants, which He "who is faithful that has promised," is willing and able to supply.

Let the goodness of your Redeemer be a subject of *imitation*. It was liberal even to the rebellious and unthankful, diffusive as the sun, gentle and salutary as the rain. It bore with many a provocation; it was not wearied by unworthiness; and it regarded not

personal inconvenience and fatigue. "As ye, therefore, have opportunity, do good unto all, especially unto them that are of the household of the Lord."

Let it stimulate your diligence. It was a holy beneficence that Christ displayed; and the Master you avowedly serve has said, "Occupy till I come," "How much owest thou unto the Lord?" As the computation rises above the estimate of the present, so let it guide the demeanour and conduct of the future.

Let the belief in this goodness banish unfounded and unworthy fears. "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Enemies may reproach; the evil they can inflict is only limited. The remainder of indwelling corruption may harass; but the struggle between flesh and spirit will ultimately and soon cease. Satan may rage, but his hostility is vain; there is armour of proof to wear—the shield of faith, and the sword of the spirit which you can employ. The grave may be gloomy; but Jesus has tasted of its bitterness, and has converted it into a tranquil resting-place for the worn out frame. The abodes of misery are fearful; but not one for whom Jesus died can be severed from His protecting care. The future is hid from sight; but what eye hath not seen is made sure by the love of Christ, by the promise and covenant of God. "Thy sun shall no more go down: thy bliss none can take from thee."

Third Table Service.

Communicants, near the commencement of one of the four narratives of our blessed Saviour's life, which have been left upon record for the instruction of His Church in every age; we find it said of Him, whose death you are preparing to commemorate, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh way the sins of the world." In these terms, Messiah was pointed out to those who had been gathered to hear the preaching of John, at the morning hour of that new dispensation by which the economy of Moses was ere long to be superseded, and by the lips of him who was sent to prepare a way for the Lord's Anointed.

This would have been a most welcome announcement in the case of all who rightly understood the Scriptural predictions regarding Jesus; and we, who have so often heard of them, and can trace their fulfilment, can be at no loss to understand the appositeness of the illustration. Jesus is, in very truth, the Lamb of God, whether you consider the features of His character or the nature of the ex-

ample which He displayed,—His divine designation to the work, or the completeness and success of that triumph which He has achieved. Behold, then, communicants, the spotless virtue of a character and deportment that were wholly free from the taint of corruption—the singular specimen of a human nature that shared not in the guilt of Adam, the illustrious example of meek submission under the worst of injuries. Consider the poverty and depression of His childhood and youth—the obstacles by which His efforts were opposed—the unbelief with which He had to struggle—His patience under suffering—the holy resolution which He exemplified—the manner in which He freely mingled with all to whom He could find access—and, is not the fidelity of the prophetic statement manifest, "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth?"

Yet this is not the only particular in which the statement of prophecy finds accomplishment. Jesus, communicants, is also the "Lamb of God" in point of *typical resemblance*. The Old Testament Scriptures are full of reference to sacrifices. At the moment of the fall there was intimation made of One by whom the "head of the serpent" should be "bruised," and after that intimation, we find not obscurely traces of the rite of sacrifice as existing. Two of Adam's sons come before the Lord, the offering of one is accepted, the oblation of the other is refused. Farther on, in the current of time, the sacrifice you propose to commemorate was still more clearly shadowed forth. The father of the faithful has been commanded to offer up the son of his old age, the child of many a prayer, and the promised seed in whom the families of the world are to be blessed. Isaac bears the wood of the cross to the appointed spot, and Abraham's hand is uplifted to deal the stroke, when the ram caught in the thicket by the horns is accepted instead. And, still farther, on that memorable night when the destroying angel passed over Egypt, each family in Israel had been commanded to take a lamb from out the flock, to sprinkle its blood upon the door-post, and to partake of that sacramental provision to prepare them for the journey; while in the temple daily, at morning and evening, a lamb was slain, the priest confessing over its head the iniquities of the people, carrying the blood with him into the holy place, and returning thence to bless them: rites not of any virtue in themselves, but intended to direct the eye of faith to Him who should, at the appointed time, "put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself."

Once more, communicants, it was said of Jesus by His forerunner

John, that He should "*take away the sins of the world.*" Such a task was beyond the power of any one not superior in dignity to every creature. He must not only be possessed of power to lay down life, but of power also to satisfy the claims of justice, obeying in our room and stead, the law which men had broken, and under the condemnation and curse of which they lay. Your Saviour's undertaking, communicants, was settled in the councils of eternity. It necessitated His abnegation for a season of that glory which He had with the Father before the world was. In prosecuting it, He met the might of Satan, and quenched the fiery darts of the wicked one. He was made sin for us, though He knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him; for "it pleased the Lord to bruise him and put him to grief." He was "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted;" the "chastisement of our peace was upon him, that by his stripes we might be healed."

Unparalleled, indeed, was His endurance, for, from the opening of His existence upon earth, through the labours of His troubled ministry, up to the agony of the garden and the endurance of the cross, Jesus was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." In the place, it is true, whither He has gone, He can no more be betrayed. His time of suffering has long been over; and the heavens have received Him till "the restitution of all things come." But, if it be appropriate and befitting to commemorate illustrious deeds; if this be the greatest of triumphs and of victories; and if the ordinance itself in which you are called upon to join be sanctioned, as it is, by divine appointment; you do well to approach the table of the Lord. Let me trust that you do so with hearts deeply sensible of the evil of sin; with affections weaned from a passing world; and with souls that "hunger and thirst after righteousness;" desirous of ratifying your engagement to the Lord; and of joining yourselves to Him in a "perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten."—On that night, &c.

AFTER COMMUNICATING.

You have now, communicants, been engaged in commemorating that death which is the foundation of a Christian's hopes, and have showed forth afresh the "decease which was accomplished at Jerusalem." Right and becoming is it thus to acknowledge the sense of obligation to pardoning mercy and justifying grace; in presence of Almighty God, and of the members of His Church upon earth, to declare your *preference* of the service of Christ, and your determina-

tion, through divine assistance, to live in fulfilment of the great end of your being. Often, moreover, has this ordinance proved a source of joy and spiritual refreshment to the pilgrim in the wilderness, when his soul was satisfied as "with marrow and fatness," and he was led with thankful lips to praise the Lord.

Permit me, however, to remind you, that the mere act of communicating, is not, in itself, enough. It may give the appearance of discipleship, and may be accompanied by sensible emotions of joy and comfort, which may, however, be more the result of natural sensibility, than the fruit of a work of grace upon the soul. You must, accordingly, be prepared to justify your profession in your walk through life. In your intercourse with the world, you are called upon to "bear about in the body" a salutary influential remembrance of the dying of the Lord Jesus, and of the purposes which it was intended to promote; you are to show and prove that you have imbibed His Spirit, and that it is your aim more fully and constantly to follow His example. "My sheep hear my voice and follow me," He has said, "but a stranger's voice will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers." "Ye are my friends," He declares, if ye do whatsoever I command you." "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."

The act in which you have engaged has been either a mockery and pretence—it may be almost unconsciously to yourselves—or it is, as I hope and trust, a *great reality*. What, then, should be the conduct,—the spirituality, and devotedness,—the avoidance of sin, and pursuit of righteousness,—which ought to mark those who "have been with Jesus?" Desire, by habits of *secret devotion*, conscientiously observed, by diligently waiting upon God in His ordinances and by the devout perusal of the Word, with fervent prayer—to preserve the flame of devotion. Let not, "because iniquity abounds," your love grow cold, nor let it be said of any one amongst you, that while in outward semblance, servants of the Most High, you "drew near to him with the mouth," and honoured Him with the lips and in the act, while yet your hearts were far from Him.

Communicants, if in sincerity and truth, having believed in Christ, and fled for refuge to Him as your deliverer, you have partaken of this ordinance, most ample is the recompence to which you are permitted to look forward—"Ye are come unto Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." The trials of life

may assail and its cares perplex. Temptation may shower its fiery darts, but against them interpose the shield of faith. You may be sufficiently supplied with this world's goods, but your best treasure lies beyond the skies, where your Elder Brother is now seated at the right hand of God. Or you may be poor, desolate, afflicted. Yet the "mountains may depart, and the hills may be removed," yet will His kindness not forsake any one of the heirs of adoption. "Fear not," He says, "I am with thee; I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine." He is not ashamed to call his people "brethren." He "resteth in his love," and when "heart and flesh faint and fail, the Lord will be the stay of their hearts and their portion for ever."—Go, then, in peace, from the table of the Lord, &c.

Fourth Table Service.

BEFORE COMMUNION.

Behold, Christians, the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sins of the world! To satisfy the demands of justice, and to meet the necessities of the case, it was requisite that a ransom should be offered, and that ransom was provided by God himself, and was offered by His only begotten and well-beloved Son, who "gave himself for us, a sacrifice and an offering of a sweet smelling savour;" and though "He knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

When John thus pointed out Jesus to his disciples, the course of His sufferings had not commenced, nor had the miracles been performed, or the discourses been spoken, by which His name is embalmed in the Gospel history. But John was divinely instructed that this was the Messiah promised to the fathers. He knew that the *sacrifices of the law* should be fulfilled in Him; and that, in the plenitude of generosity and grace, when mankind lay under a curse because of disobedience, and the ascendancy of Satan, was proved by the darkness that prevailed, and the depravity that reigned, —He, who was the "woman's seed," should hurl Satan from his throne, expiate offences, "bring in an everlasting righteousness," meet, in His own person, the stroke of offended justice; and, at the price of abasement, insult, and suffering, rescue, by the outpouring of His blood and the efficacy of His intercession, a countless multitude, who now have "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

Communicants! you cannot see Jesus with the bodily sight, but

you can behold Him with the eye of faith. You cannot listen to His discourses as delivered by His own lips, but you can peruse and profit by the record of these as preserved in the pages of inspiration. You cannot minister to Him of your substance; but you can render to Him the homage of your lives. You are unable, like Joseph, to lay His sacred body in the new tomb, where mortal flesh never before had been deposited; but you can cherish deeply His love within your hearts, and it is, I trust, from experience of His beneficence, that you are now able to say, "Oh, how I love Thy law," "How great is His goodness, and how great is His beauty!" "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell what he hath done for my soul."

These elements of *bread and wine* set before you the body which was *broken* and the blood which was poured out. They intimate the necessity for *crucifying the flesh*; and they are intended to remind you that the followers of Jesus are bound by no common obligations,—that they are debtors to a "love that passeth knowledge," —and that it ought to be the main business and great desire of their existence to live unto His glory. You bear the name of Christ. You occupy the honoured position of those for whom His blood was shed; and it is, I trust, under a deep conviction of the sacredness and binding obligation of the vows you are about to take, that you would now commemorate His death. "On that night," &c.

AFTER COMMUNICATING.

Illustrious and cheering, communicants! are those hopes which the followers of the Saviour are permitted to cherish. Their *sins*, it is true, are numerous and aggravated; any one of them being sufficient to sink soul and body into eternal torment. Their *unworthiness* is painfully evident to themselves; but their hope rests on the worthiness of another. Their *trials* are oftentimes severe; but the sympathising heart of the Man of sorrows knows them all, and the assurance has been given that these shall be succeeded by an "exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Their *shortcomings* in duty are often infinitely distressing; but this distress evinces the tenderness of conscience; and far different is their case from that of those who work iniquity with greediness, and remain careless and dead under the awakening tidings of the Gospel.

But let me beseech you, communicants, *never* to forget *whose* love it is that you have thus commemorated,—at *what a price* your redemption was secured,—and how possible is the supposition that the

heart may be deceived in the midst of its professions. You have entered upon a *conflict*, and it must be maintained. You are bound by most sacred *obligations*, and these must be kept. You are called by the name of Christ, and you must be prepared to "depart from all iniquity." You have "drunk of the Lord's cup," and "the cup of devils must be forsworn." You must be disciples at all times, in every place, in the world as in the church, "dying daily unto sin," "hating the garment spotted by the flesh," and solicitous to "shew out of a good conversation your faith unfeigned."

To the unconverted mind, this seems hard; to the insincere, this seems to be impossible. But the Christian knows of his "help, that it cometh from the Lord;" that the "way to the Holiest is ever open;" and that Jesus the "*Lamb*," who once was "slain," now intercedes for His people at the right hand of the Majesty on high. For *you* He tasted the bitterness of dying. For you He took the condition of a servant He became a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." He died upon the cross, and He was laid in a lowly tomb. The hands that were extended to bless were pierced with nails; the feet that bore Him on missions of benevolence were transfixed; but the tongue which had spoken so many precious words, declared "It is finished;" and the morning of the third day witnessed an emptied sepulchre. Can there then be assurance or encouragement of a stronger kind? or a firmer pledge of future glory and elevation? for, as "he was delivered for our offences, he has been raised for our justification." *Where* now then is the scandal of the cross? Shall you ever be ashamed of acting in his service? Shall you not live, imitating the spotless purity of the Lamb of God? Shall you not die in the belief that God, who spared not his own Son, "will with Him also freely give you all things;" that death is now "swallowed up of victory," and that hereafter "the Lamb that is in the midst of them." Go, then, in peace from the table of the Lord, and may the spirit of love and peace abide with you for ever. Amen.

The number of table services, of course, varies according to the amount of communicants who are present, and it is very undesirable unduly to protract the forenoon service. All having communicated, who desire to do so, and the minister having returned to the pulpit, invites the congregation to join with him in praising God, after the manner of our Lord and his disciples, who concluded the first celebration of the ordinance

by the singing of a hymn. The minister then gives a few parting words of advice or consolation appropriate to the occasion.

Concluding Address.

My Friends and Brethren,—It is in accordance with usual practice, and as a not unbefitting close of the present service, that we should address to you a few words of exhortation. The elements of communion of which you have partaken, are removed from sight. The ordinance, as commanded by Jesus, and as practised among us, has been attended to; and after the services of this evening and of the morrow, you will again be called upon to engage in your usual and stated occupations.

Another Sabbath has dawned on us, and not a few of its hours have sped. We have been called upon to engage in secret and family devotion,—have come into the sanctuary,—have repeatedly praised God with our lips,—have joined in prayer, and have heard many words of exhortation. Such is the way in which no small proportion of every Sabbath should be occupied. But, on this day, and occurring appropriately at more distant intervals, we have eaten of bread and drunk wine in commemoration of Christ's death, and have, many of us, I trust, been enabled to see "the king in his beauty," and to contemplate the land that lieth afar off. Our footsteps have been conducted to Gethsemane and Calvary. We have looked upon Jesus in the power of enemies, permitted to assail Him —and have heard of solemn and touching discourses spoken to His disciples preparatory to these events. We have been called on, in the exercise of faith, to look on Jesus, invested with the thorny crown, wearing the mock robe of homage,—a reeden sceptre put into his hands,—and a band of Pilate's soldiers bending the knee to Him in scorn, and saying, "Hail, king of the Jews."

That we could think of such treatment entirely unmoved, would be an indication of the being devoid not only of the love of Christians, but of the ordinary feelings of humanity. He that suffered had done no wrong, yet "grief was his companion" during His earthly pilgrimage. We know, moreover, that the record of the gospel history is true. There is no doubt, therefore, of the absolute veracity of every incident stated to have taken place. What, then, let me ask, is the sense of the *evil of sin* which you should, consequently, be led to form? How great should be your wonder at the *compassion* and *long-suffering* of God? How strongly should the flame of *gratitude* burn within you towards One who hath "loved you and

bought you with the price of His own blood? Truly has it been averred that when God would call into being the heavens and the earth, He had but "to speak, and it was done: to command, and all things did stand fast;" while to redeem sinners of mankind—those who were embraced within the design of the new covenant,—a new and stupendous thing behoved to occur. The second person of the trinity must become the "woman's seed." Christ must submit to unexampled humiliation,—be a persecuted wanderer,—a despised preacher of righteousness,—must bear the burden of His people's transgressions,—and, in order to do so, must submit unto death, even the painful and accursed death of the cross.

Let me then put the question to each one present, "What think ye of Christ?" Were there ever love and endurance like unto His. "A man," it is said, "that hath friends must shew himself friendly," but here is "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." "Greater love," says St. Paul, "hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend; but God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

What your opinions are regarding Christ, as to the glories of His person, the strength of His love, and the greatness of His coming triumph—we are bound, so far as can be judged of by an outward act—to regard you as having expressed in coming to His table. Before you "Christ Jesus has been set forth crucified;" and before the church, to the knowledge of the world, and in the view of God Himself, you have vowed that you will be faithful to His service. Never *can* you have reason to regret such a choice, for you cannot serve a better friend or be connected with a more liberal master. Even now, I can conceive of some of you as ready to say with Peter, "though I should die with Thee yet will I not deny Thee." There is, however, such a thing as the fervour of an imagined "first love" for Christ becoming cold; while it behoves us to remember that even when professions of new obedience are made in sincerity, we have powerful opponents within and without to contend with. We have to resist, steadfast in faith, the great spiritual adversary; have to stand, with an unflinching front, as soldiers of Christ, looking to our Captain's eye and orders; ever bearing in mind injunctions such as these, "Keep thine heart with diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation." "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour shall not be in vain, and that in due season ye shall reap if ye faint

not." "Give diligence that your calling and election may be sure," by a careful improvement of the means of grace which are afforded for your use; remembering that it is God that "worketh in you, to will and to do of His good pleasure;" and that only to such as are "faithful unto death," has "a crown of life" been promised. "Herein," said Jesus, "is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

To those who for the *first* time, or but lately, have joined in this service, let me address a single word. Rest not, I beseech you, in "bodily exercise," or in external approach, which "profits little" indeed, by itself. There was another day when other hands gave up some of you, that you might be set apart to the service of God. These hands may now be mouldering in the dust, these voices may be hushed in death. But did they die in the faith and love of Jesus; have you reason to think that there could be written above their resting-place, "a Christian sleepeth here?" Then are you called upon to follow their example—bound to it as having been taught to know the truth—doubly bound, because having professed adherence to the Saviour's cause, you must take still greater "heed" to yourselves, as having the "vows of the Lord" upon you, and as thence called upon to resist temptation, avoid the appearance of evil, and lay fast "hold upon eternal life." Seek then to live with Jesus. Have frequent recourse to prayer. Take God's word in all things to direct you. Aim at usefulness in your day and generation. Slumber not as others do; but try to be the means of achieving some lasting good to the souls of your fellow-creatures.

Respecting none can it be said that they have a title to calculate upon prolonged vigour of health and length of days. But so much the longer that any live in this world, so much the less of time on earth remains for each; and the saying is true, "the young may, but the old *must* die soon." It is no stretch, therefore, of imagination to conceive to be assured, much more probable is it that there are those who shall not see another communion Sabbath. The healthy and vigorous may be removed, falling like grass before the mower's scythe. But in the case of some, the "keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men bow." What is the fruit then of past communions, many of which you have attended? Are you ripening for glory or for doom? Are any of you as insensible, as cold hearted, as grasping, as faithless to Christianity as ever, as much set upon the earthly joys from which you must soon part? Suffer yet, once more, the word of admonition. Do you read the Scriptures—do you pray in secret and with your

household? Awake then thou that sleepest, lest thou awake in hell—for not regular church going, nor frequent communicating can be to you of any service if you do not go to Christ and cleave to Him with your whole hearts, as alone able to rescue and deliver you.

May God grant to all of us His blessing; may He make us monuments of His mercy, and enable us to glorify His name. Amen.

A concluding prayer is then offered up.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION.

Heavenly Father, we beseech Thee to follow with Thine effectual blessing, all the sacred and solemn service in which we have been engaged. Let the lessons of instruction from Thy word sink deeply into our hearts, and produce abundant fruit unto holiness. Let the vows we have taken upon us ever be remembered; and the obligations we have come under, influence the whole subsequent tenor of our lives.

We praise Thee, especially, that thou hast spread for us a table in the wilderness, and that we have been enabled to commemorate the dying love of the Lord Jesus. May we preserve our fidelity to the end, and may we bear in mind and strive to copy the example He has left us, that we should walk in His steps. Confirm every good resolution, every purpose of new obedience which we have formed. May we count all things but loss for the excellency of His knowledge; press forward more diligently to the mark, and continually bear about the dying love of Christ, seeking that the life also of Jesus may be manifest in our mortal bodies.

Preserve us from the snares of a subtle and vigilant spiritual adversary: keep us from confidence and presumption, and wilful sin. May we grow in grace, and be clothed with the whole armour of God, having our feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of Jesus, taking the shield of faith, and having for an helmet the hope of salvation; so that, as we have received the Lord Jesus, we may also walk in Him, rooted and built up, and established in the faith. As having taken the oath of allegiance to a celestial leader, may we follow through good and through bad report the Captain of our salvation. As exhorted to look unto Him, our advocate and intercessor within the veil, may we come forward boldly to a throne of grace, and there find mercy to pardon and grace to help at every time of need. In prosperity, may we be watchful; in adversity, submissive. In health, may we bear in mind our need of spiritual healing; in sickness, may we lean upon the higher rock, and repose our confidence on the

arm that made the universe. May we be joined to Thee in an everlasting covenant; that so living or dying, in time or throughout eternity, we may be Thine, and Thine only. As we have joined ourselves to the church militant on earth, may we also join the general assembly and church of the first born in heaven, and be admitted to the presence of God the judge of all; of Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant; of an innumerable company of angels and spirits of the just made perfect; and of the whole host of heaven, who shall serve Thee in the house not made with hands.

Pardon what Thy pure eyes have seen amiss in this day's service. Forgive the preparation that has not been the preparation of the sanctuary. Let the sins of those who have made an unwarrantable approach to Thy table be forgiven; may they yet be taught to know the value of the Saviour's presence; and the preciousness of the love of Jesus. Be gracious to thine aged servants, the period of whose pilgrimage may be nearly closed. The Lord be their keeper, and their shade upon their right hand, that they may not be moved. Prosper and bless them who have this day joined themselves visibly to the family of Jesus. Lord, keep them unspotted from the world. Accept of the surrender they have made to Thy cause. Enable them to maintain consistency, and to attain a rapid progress in the divine life: bless them, henceforth, even for evermore, and make them a blessing unto many.

Bless us, O Lord, as a people. Let pastors and flock be blessed more abundantly. Train up a rising generation as a seed to serve Thee. Bless the elders of this parish, and may they be recompensed abundantly for their work and labour of love. Refresh this parched and weary spot. Keep Thy people in this parish, to whatever communion they belong, stedfast to Thy service. Rich and poor we commend alike to Thee, who art the Maker and Preserver of all. Visit with Thy comfort the disconsolate, cheer the mourner and uphold the dying, that when heart and flesh faint and fail, Thou mayest be the stay of their hearts and their portion for ever.

Bless Thy church everywhere, and shew Thy favour to that portion of it also with which we are more particularly connected. Prosper the cause of pure Christianity and of vital religion. May the boundaries of Messiah's kingdom be extended. Let the Gentiles fear Thee, and may Thine ancient people be enlightened to discern the glory of the sun of righteousness.

Be with us in singing a parting hymn of praise. Dismiss us with Thy blessing thereafter. Let Thy presence be with us during

the interval of worship, and come up with Thy servant who is then to address us from the holy oracles.

The forenoon service is then closed by the singing of another psalm or paraphrase, and by the pronouncing of the benediction.

Afternoon or Evening Communion Sabbath Service.

This Service is conducted very much after the manner of an ordinary diet of worship, excepting that, in the devotional portion peculiar reference is appropriately made to the previous solemnity, and a blessing is anew implored upon the dispensation of the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper, and those who have joined in its celebration. The topics most appropriate to be noticed will readily suggest themselves. The discourse is to be regarded as a principal feature in this portion of the day's work, and is appropriately of a practical, rousing, or encouraging description.

The specimen now given is intended to be chiefly of the latter description, and is inserted simply in the hope that it may be somewhat useful to those who have the early prospect, amidst many engagements incidental to the season, of preparing for this important and interesting part of Ministerial duty.

THE HOUSE OF MANY MANSIONS.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."—JOHN xiv. 2, 3.

These words were spoken shortly before the period of our Lord's sufferings, when the hour was at hand that Jesus should depart out of this world to the Father, and the earth in which he had consented to sojourn for a time should cease to be the place of his peculiar and personal abode. It is evident, that the apostles were but very imperfectly alive to the exact nature of the incidents that were to follow, had drawn different auguries from various preceding events, and understood otherwise the language of prophecy regarding the Messiah. Yet they had been warned by their Master, that he was doomed to meet with rejection and refusal—insult and outrage—suffering and abasement. And now he had told them plainly of what was to happen—spoke of his removal, and foretold the treach-

ery of one of their number. Perceiving that they were profoundly agitated in consequence of these communications, the recital of which the reverence and love they entertained rendered doubly painful; the same tenderness that made Jesus turn the conversation to points connected with his agony and sorrow, in order that they might be in some measure prepared for the shock, induced him now to dwell upon topics of consolation, the full force of which they would afterwards be better able to comprehend. These were intermingled with most valuable counsels, and accompanied by an assurance, that though soon to be no longer with them, their interests and those of his believing people would be not less present to his thoughts. Nay, his departure was altogether expedient and necessary. He must finish the work given to him to do on earth—go to his Father and theirs—to his God and their God. Nor, till he had ascended on high, could the Comforter come, and that dispensation of the Spirit commence, which was essential to the success of their ministry.

But the text was not intended to administer instruction and comfort only to the disciples. As meant to be the common property of believers in every age, it may suggest to us some consolatory and instructive thoughts.

The Lord Jesus here speaks as his people's sympathizing, generous, Almighty Friend; declares the purpose of love he was fully to execute; and sets before his followers the recompence of reward awaiting each of the faithful. He uses, too, on this occasion, the language of conscious majesty and greatness; while exhibiting himself as One who, though upon the eve of departure for a distant country, was yet to have their interests most warmly at heart.

I. In the *first* place, his words describe *that abode* whither he was about to proceed. "In my Father's house are many mansions." From these glorious regions Jesus had descended, shrouding his dignity under a veil of flesh. Although the Eternal Son of God, and the object of the Father's approbation and complacency, he was "made in all things like unto his brethren;" he appeared in the weakness of infancy, gradually increased in stature, was exposed to manifold trials and to all the sinless infirmities of our lot; he came in the power of Godhead, yet also in the weakness of humanity. But he appeared as the great Prophet of the Church, to whom there belonged a certain knowledge of the mysteries unseen by mortal eye. He was therefore able to unveil the happiness which his death was to purchase for his people; and he now assured the disciples of the full provision made for the reception of be-

lievers into the abode that was prepared from the foundation of the world.

The portion of the righteous is represented in Scripture under a great variety of images. Yet much has not been told; and our ideas are at best only general and imperfect. We must await fuller disclosures and actual vision. On many other topics, the language of Scripture is direct and plain; our difficulty in comprehending it, is caused chiefly by the grandeur of the subjects unfolded. But when the sacred writers would tell us of the recompence of reward, they seem to labour under a difficulty in conveying to us adequate notions of the glory hereafter to be revealed. Gorgeous images are employed. Objects and advantages most prized on earth are adduced as illustrative. Dazzling riches, loftiest honours, peace, repose, and beauty, are set in contrast with the poverty, uncertainty, and distraction of the present state. Volumes of harmony are described as filling the dwelling-place above. A city is exhibited radiant in its brightness, and having no need of the waning and waxing luminaries of earth. An assemblage of worshippers—a countless host are spoken of as convened, who stand before the throne of God and of the Lamb, clad in the white robes of purity, and bearing in their hands the triumphal palm. Sometimes an entirely different arrangement of matter is presented to thought. There is "a new heaven and new earth," where no tear falls, no pain is felt, and no sin can enter—formed after the old have disappeared. The people of God are there subsequent to the resurrection, when the solemn process of judgment has been finished; their frames, incorruptible and immortal, are "fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body," and hence must be supposed to be much more purified and ethereal than those which they at present possess. The *throne* of God is spoken of as set up, and it is surrounded by obedient servants, once spiris dwelling in a tabernacle of clay, but whose every bosom is animated by fealty and love to the Supreme; for the dwellers in that land are "kings and priests unto God."

The description *here* given by our Saviour is of a different cast, but not less beautiful and enticing. He calls heaven "My Father's house." The ideas thus suggested, are capable of being applied to the present state of Christians with peculiar appropriateness and force. They are now exiles, "*strangers, pilgrims.*" Their condition is that of vicissitude and imperfection. On earth they have "no continuing city," and they must look forward in faith to one that is yet to come. There is, however, in reserve for them a *fixed and en-*

during habitation; an abode is prepared to which each of the faithful shall, in due time, be admitted. Ties we may acknowledge upon earth, most valuable and precious; and during the period of our stay, we may allowably contract a certain measure of attachment to particular localities. Nor is it favourable to the happiness and elevation of man that he should live apart, without definite connection with some particular spot upon the globe. Thus the place of his birth, the scenery amidst which he was reared, the companions and guardians of early life, are fondly cherished and gratefully remembered. But *heaven* is the Christian's proper residence and home, with which he is connected by a more direct, permanent, and enduring bond. It is the abode of Christ, the presence-chamber of the king, the place where the saints shall be assembled, and shall fully enjoy their rest. It is not only the temple but the *home.* Possessing every character of permanence; adapted to contain all the heirs of glory; it is spoken of, perhaps, with an allusion (intending also to remind us of its inalienable, inviolable sacredness) to the numerous chambers comprised within the Jewish temple, as containing "many mansions." While, therefore, it is our lot to dwell as though in *tabernacles* below, exposed to adversity's furious blast and piercing shower; *thence* there shall be no dismission nor any desire to be removed. A holy and happy kindred shall be assembled, knit in brotherhood's closest bonds. Its "walls are salvation, its gates are praise." Thither to each of the ransomed shall an entrance be "ministered abundantly." For *that* we have the assurance of the Lord. Had there been uncertainty, he would not have concealed it. There is a *claim*, moreover, that will never be gainsaid. It is the "*Father's* house," and the government of it is intrusted to that *Son* who hath ransomed believers by the shedding of his blood, and has wrought out a perfect obedience in their room and stead, who "laid down his life" for them; and if "children," they are "heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." "This is my beloved Son," said the Father, "in whom I am well pleased." "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands." "He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the

sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." For believers, therefore,—for all the followers of Christ, the everlasting gates stand open. The token and seal of the covenant on earth is true; and they may warrantably look forward to the ascending of that high and holy hill. Even already their "fellowship is with the Father," in and through Christ himself; and of all who shall believe in Him to everlasting life, join themselves to him, lay hold on this succour, and rest on this protection, has the Saviour said, unfolding the riches of his matchless love, "Henceforth I call you not servants; but I have called you friends." Friends of Jesus—how honourable *that* title! "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." Yes, in the palace of the Great King, every one of his followers shall find a place. "Bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth." However lofty the recompence, it is the rejoicing of His benevolence, and it is accordant with the strictest justice to bestow it. There *is* no barrier to frustrate the approach of any. On behalf of all of *them* did Jesus prefer the supplication, speaking with a voice that pleaded not in vain, and pointing to an object of importance, and a scene of unmingled glory, "Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." Hence he speaks to his followers of the possession he has made their own, pledging to it the gracious word—"In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so I would have told you." The partners in his tribulation are destined to be sharers in his glory. They who forsake on his account *shall* not be left comfortless; but "to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne." "I give," he says, "unto my sheep, eternal life." They are joined to the whole family in heaven and upon earth, who possess in common a share of his regard

II. In the *second* place, the text contains the *avowal of a purpose cherished by the Redeemer:* "I go to prepare a place for you." To those more immediately and originally referred to, this was an announcement that Christ's sufferings and departure were closely connected with their highest well being.

In the councils of eternity the plan of salvation had been formed. Yet only when the "fulness of time," arrived, did Messiah appear on earth. *Now* the momentous hour was at hand, when the heaven-appointed sacrifice should be offered, and the Lamb of God be slain. The efficacy of the Redeemer's death was *not* indeed confined to the period succeeding this; from the foundation of the world it had con-

stituted the ground of pardon and acceptance. From age to age, fruits of it were gathered as by anticipation, and earnests were afforded of the harvest in coming times. Many there were who had seen *that* day "afar off, and were glad." Places had been occupied already—to adopt the figure of the text—in that "house" above. Often before had the repentance of a sinner afforded joy; angels had guarded the emancipated spirit; and the souls of the faithful had entered into rest. Patriarchs, prophets, martyrs, were already there; and many a humble believer had departed from this world in the hope and prospect of immortal bliss. But the great enterprise to which the Lord Jesus now proceeded was essential for all; the decease at Jerusalem was the crowning act of the obedience of our Surety, as it was that on which depended the acceptance of his people. It was needful that *thus* the divine law should be magnified, and God's displeasure at sin marked most signally even on a victim so illustrious; who, though himself spotless, was treated as if he had been guilty.

It is impossible or any other principle than that of *vicarious substitution*, to account for certain phenomena noticeable in the deportment of the Lord Jesus towards the closing period of his stay on earth. Hence the mysterious *cloud* that settled on his spirit, and the plaintive cry of abandonment that escaped from him on the cross. Hence the extremity of anguish and oppression he endured, when, in the garden, his "sweat was as great drops of blood falling to the ground." Hence the permission of the powers of darkness to assail him; and the fact that mortal hands were allowed to seize, bind, and crucify the Lord of glory. But he was "delivered for our offences," as he was "raised for our justification;" the "chastisement of our peace" was exacted of him, and "by his stripes we are healed." *Why* otherwise should the righteous die for the unholy, and the Son of the Highest bear his bosom to the stroke? Unparalleled greatness of redeeming love! Well may it prompt the last words in time and afford a theme for the anthems of eternity itself! Yes, men might be insensible—might look carelessly and even hatingly upon a crucified Redeemer. What they saw should have rebuked them. They might insolently bend the knee, and utter the taunting word, as though *this* had been a mortal only. But nature was *not* silent: the universe acknowledged; the rocks were split, the temple veil was rent, the sun was darkened, the dead appeared. The circles of the blessed were not unobservant; they gazed with wonder and awe upon the scene. Even the regions of despair were moved; and the defeated hosts of hell recoiled from the spectacle with dismay.

This, however, is not the full amount of the expression we are now considering. When the Redeemer said, "I go to prepare a place for you," he did not mean, that with the endurance on the cross, where he fully discharged the claims of justice, (of which evidence was given in his resurrection from the dead) there remained no more for him to do in order to the reception of his people into glory. *One* part only of his priestly office was thus completed. He had made atonement. But he was also, as the "forerunner" of believers, to enter heaven, where he reigns as "head over all things to the church." It is said, accordingly, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, "Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands," "not with the blood of goats and calves, but with his own blood, entered in once into the holy place." As the high priest of old upon the day of atonement, after slaying the lamb, which was required to be "without spot or blemish," having taken in a vessel a portion of its blood, went with it into the holy of holies, and there sprinkling the mercy-seat with the blood, made intercession for the people, who stood praying without, and anxiously awaiting the re-appearance of their priestly head—so Jesus, the "minister of the true sanctuary," himself both the priest and victim, having offered up sacrifice, entered into heaven, there to appear for us in the presence of God. This part of Christ's priestly office remains. It is most needful and precious. "We," says the apostle John, after urging believers to follow after holiness, "we have an *advocate* with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" whose affectionate interest is awake in behalf of all who have been given to him; who is acquainted with the case of each, knows their weakness, and "ever liveth that he may intercede." Of however little account, then, a believer may be in the estimate of men, yet he has a part in the solicitude of One who cares for and loves his people to the end. For all such, heaven and earth have been connected by an unseen yet indestructible and Almighty bond. Hence "there is no condemnation to any who are in Christ." Theirs is the blessedness of those to whom God imputes not guile. Nor will their progress be unaided as they would advance in godliness, maintain "the good fight of faith," and contend against "the devil, the world, and the flesh." The followers of Jesus are accordingly encouraged to go forward by the consideration that his presence will be with them, and that he will conduct them unto rest. The desert path may be rough, the ascent steep, the foes many and maliguant. But "in the name of the Lord they

are encouraged to set up their banners." "Greater is he who is for them, than all that can be against them." "Thou hast a little love —thou hast kept the faith, and thou hast not denied my name." In his grace, and by his watchfulness, may they hope to be preserved; and he bids them "be of good cheer," for "he has overcome the world." Let them, therefore, make and hold fast to the good profession. Let no allurement relax their vigilance, nor any threatened violence affright them. He is even now preparing for them "places in the Father's house." Day by day he is making intercession; and still the sinner is assured of welcome and free access; until at length the appointed hour has come, when the last soul shall have been redeemed from bondage, to rescue which his blood was shed; when the last sinner has been sanctified and made meet for "the inheritance of the saints in light." *Then* will He be revealed "in the glory of his Father, and the holy angels with him," coming that his followers may be invested with the full measure of promised bliss.

III. In the *third* place, our Lord assured the disciples, that *his absence would not be perpetual.* He was repeatedly seen after the resurrection, so as to dispel every doubt respecting the completeness of his undertaking, and the fulness of his victory. Gathered at the expiry of these occasional visits and of that short sojourn, they witnessed the *ascension*—beheld him quit the place of his sinless sorrows—and saw him arise from the earth that had been ennobled by his stay, until he was concealed from view by the intervening cloud. Awaiting in Jerusalem the promise of the Father, they found, in the communication of the Spirit and descent of the Holy Ghost, the presence and bestowal of the gracious Comforter regarding whom their Master spoke. But the reference made here, is to an event that was *not* to happen till long after they, released from the field of strife, should have entered the intermediate state—each awaiting, in his uprightness, the general resurrection. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself."

There may indeed be a more immediate meaning assigned to these words, as though they were intended to give assurance that the Redeemer's care embraces the invisible world and the unseen state. Whither, accordingly, does the righteous go, when he departs, but to be "with Christ?" Why the weakness of the body and the sinking of the strength, the failing vision and the labouring breath? Doubtless it is the debt of nature, or rather of sin; but it is also the

hour when support is given, and a celestial presence is at hand. It is Christ approaching to his own; it is the Redeemer's summons, "Come up hither"—the signal for leaving an abode of weariness and pain, and for transference to a state of peace, rest, and joy. Like the material sun, life is ebbing; but the orb of day is only temporarily hid when he seems to sink into the ocean chambers—he is shining still upon other climes, and fulfilling there his appointed course. At a given period the portals of light will be unbarred, and slumbering cities and silent fields will together be greeted by his smile. "To-day," said our Lord to the expiring malefactor, and when in his own extremity of suffering, "*to-day* shalt thou be with me in paradise." "To depart and to be with Christ," exclaimed St. Paul, "it is better" than to linger upon earth. "He leadeth me," says David, "in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." "I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for *thou* art with me." Yes; all things are under the Mediator's sway. Not only does he sustain the Christian's life, but he guards also his people's death, and their very dust is precious in his sight. Need, then, the believer fear a dissolved terror and a vanquished foe? His "flesh may rest in hope," even in the lowly chamber—his spirit is transferred, when it quits the body, to the presence of his Saviour and his God.

It is *not*, however, merely or even chiefly to this that our Saviour seems now to have alluded, but to his visible, exalted advent, when he shall come a second time, "without sin unto salvation," for the purpose of winding up this world's economy, of proclaiming the eternal destiny of each child of Adam—of consigning the wicked to the full measure of their punishment—and of welcoming the righteous before an assembled universe. "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him." Once he came in lowliness and weakness, but then it will be in power and might, to take vengeance on his foes. Once his followers were only a few—*then* the thousands of the angelic hosts shall be in attendance, and all his righteous servants shall lift up their heads with joy. Once a crown of thorns was round his sacred head—*then* that countenance will be brighter than the sun. Every mortal will be there; every sleeper must obey the summons, "Come to judgment." Yet even then his people need not fear. It is the Saviour, loved and served by them on earth, that occupies the throne; and *this* delaration gives assurance of their safety, "Whosoever shall confess me before men"—it may

have been the humblest labourer or even the weakest child—"*him* will I confess before my Father and his holy angels." *Their* hearts, accordingly, need not be troubled when the souls of others fail them for fear. United to Jesus as his own, and purified from every stain—fitted for the loftiest privileges, and possessors of undying life—*their* security is complete. Christ will present them to the Father "blameless." When he comes again, not one out of the whole number will be forgotten, but they shall follow in his train unto the everlasting dwelling place that has been prepared from the birth of time—the place where God himself "shall be all in all."

IV. In the *fourth* place, our Lord here gives his people an intimation of *the nature of that bliss of which they are then to be made partakers*—"that where I am, there ye may be also." This happiness is connected with the contemplation of his glory and the manifestation of his presence—they shall "be like him, for they shall see him where he is." If, accordingly, his presence was so desirable upon earth—his favour so prized, his ordinances loved, and his honour dear—of what mutual satisfaction shall that intercourse and fellowship be then productive? To him they will ascribe the praise of their deliverance. He will "feed them and lead them by living fountains of waters." If the trials formerly gone through are at all remembered, it will be only as heightening the security and bliss of which they shall then be conscious. What delight, then, in surveying the *fields of providence*—what wonder in contemplating the works and ways of God—what congenial intercourse with the holy and truly eminent of all ages—*may* be included in the portion of the heirs of glory! At least we are assured, that no *blank* will then be felt; and that little as our faculties may yet be able to understand it, the inheritance of the righteous, the accompaniments of the Father's house, will be such, that every longing expectation which Scripture authorizes will be more than gratified.

Be it remembered, however, that this is the portion solely of the *righteous*, and that none but they are qualified to enjoy it. Hence the importance of the present season, and the indispensable need of applying "all diligence," that the calling and election may be made sure. Learn therefore to rise above a passing world, and desire to act in all things as the children of immortality should do. The promises of God are no doubt sure and steadfast, but their application is to those alone who are being renewed after his image. His *ordinances* are intended and adapted to promote our growth in grace;

but they cannot be profitable if they amount only to an outward form. *Here* we are bidden to "walk by faith, and not by sight" —to "set our affections on the things that are above"—and to live in a heavenly, self-denied, and holy manner. Without *this*, it is declared that none can "*see the Lord;*" and only in so far as these designs are being answered can we be considered as preparing for the mansions of eternal bliss. Let us therefore aim at the attainment of this rest: then may we derive from the Redeemer's assurance to his disciples that comfort which it is well adapted to convey. Bear in mind, then, my Christian friends, at once the obligations laid upon you, and the recompence to which you are encouraged to look forward; when, present with the Saviour, your condition shall be perfect, complete, and glorious. Shall the soul—to ransom which Jesus died—forget or refuse to recognise its lofty destiny? Shall the body, which is hereafter to be made like his, become an instrument of defilement? Shall the example He gave ever be forgotten, or the course He calls upon you to prosecute be forsaken? "So run, therefore, that you may obtain." So watch that ye may not be surprised. Faithful is he whose promises are recorded; let it be your aim to prove faithful to his service.

If I am now addressing those who feel that they have not an interest in this promise, and that the happiness declared to be in store for the followers of Jesus is not such as could afford to them delight; let me *earnestly* exhort them to ponder the alternative. When the Redeemer comes again, it will also be to take vengeance upon those who refused to hear his voice, and who set at nought the overtures of his mercy. No doubt, their fate was sealed before; the delusion under which they laboured was dispersed when the mortal life came to a close. How solemn to look upon the figure of the departed, and to bear in mind that the spirit once animating that clay now knows its state, has done with time, and has become absorbed in the gloom or splendour of eternity—that, in the former case, the period has for ever passed, during which the blood of the great Sacrifice avails. Let none delay to seek an interest in Christ, cleaving to the iniquity that must finally be their ruin. Entreat *his* aid before *that* night comes on; else it will be marked by rayless gloom, agony, and despair. Be persuaded to join the disciples of the Lord, since those only can be safe or truly happy who give themselves up to Him in a perpetual covenant. While all who do wickedly must fear before Him, blessed shall they be who trust in Him that is mighty to give deliverance in the hour of trial. Under his protec-

tion they need "fear no evil," nor should they murmur under any deprivation. For, in his time of greatest majesty and triumph, Christ will make his people participate in the honour with which he is to be invested, when "every knee shall bow to him, and every tongue confess" that he is Lord. "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever." Amen.

Concluding Prayer.

We bless Thee, O Lord, for the renewed opportunity which we have enjoyed of worshipping in the sanctuary, and thank Thee that, this day, we have been permitted to approach the place where Thine honour dwelleth; have been led to view, in mingling with the assembly of Thy people, and in the hallowed rest of which we have partaken, an image and reflection of the holy employment of Thy servants, who have been relieved from the burden of the flesh, and now serve God without weariness, day and night, in the temple above. Quicken us that we may again call upon Thy name; and, having this day been privileged to join in that solemn and most comforting ordinance which commemorates the decease once accomplished at Jerusalem, may we be filled with thankfulness that we have enrolled ourselves among the followers of the Lamb, and that the broken body and shed blood of Christ have been represented to us by the bread and wine of which Thy people have partaken.

Impress upon our hearts a vivid and influential remembrance of what we have this day heard of the word of life. The vows of the Lord God are now upon us. The bread which was broken was the communion of the body of Christ, and the cup which was poured out was the communion of His blood. Under solemn if silent protestations of gratitude and obedience, we have partaken of this sacred feast. May we remember that he who is joined unto the Lord is called upon to be one in spirit with Him, seeking to adorn his doctrine, and live to the glory of Him who calls sinners out of darkness into the marvellous light of the truth.

Thy vows are upon us; let our hope and trust be placed in Thee. As enrolled beneath the banner of the Prince of Peace, keep us from the snares of the devil, of the world, and of the flesh. Enable us to follow the Captain of our salvation, who was made perfect through sufferings; who, dying as a ransom for His people, has also left them an example that they should follow His steps, who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners;

in whose mouth there was found no guile, and who went about doing good.

Be gracious, O Lord, to every member of Thy church. Do good in Thine own pleasure unto Zion, and build up the walls of Jerusalem. May her ministers be diligent and successful in discharging the momentous duties with which they are entrusted.

Have mercy upon all who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. Have mercy on the tempted and sorrowful. Comfort the mournful and desponding. May the prisoners be relieved, and the slaves of sin and Satan be set free from bondage!

Keep us steadfast, O Lord in the faith, fear, and love of Thee. Refresh Thine heritage when it is weary. Revive Thy work among us: strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Be Thou our father: Thou, King of kings, our Protector, and Thou, merciful Redeemer, our unfailing Friend.

And to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be all praise ascribed, world without end. Amen.

Occasional Services.

THE LICENSING OF PROBATIONERS FOR THE MINISTRY.

The preliminary steps necessary to be taken, and the qualifications requisite in the view of the Church, will be found clearly detailed in Dr Hill's work on the "Practice of the Several Judicatories of the Church of Scotland," to which reference may be made by those desirous of full information on the subject. On the conclusion of the trials of the applicant, which embrace an inquiry into his proficiency in the literary, philosophical, and theological studies which he has prosecuted at the University, and which also include the delivery of certain prescribed discourses, amongst which are a lecture and a popular sermon, that a specimen may be given of the applicant's aptitude to officiate in public, a "conjunct view" of the whole is taken, and if that be satisfactory in the opinion of the Presbytery of the bounds, the following questions are put to him:—

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, and the only rule of faith and manners?

2. Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith, approven by the General Assembly of the National Church, and ratified by law in the year 1690, and frequently confirmed by divers acts of Parliament since that time, to be the truths of God, contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; and do you own the whole doctrine therein contained as the confession of your faith?

3. Do you sincerely own the purity of worship presently authorized and practised in this Church, and asserted in Act 15th General Assembly 1707, entitled, Act against innovation in the worship of God; and do you also own the Presbyterian government and discipline now so happily established in this Church; and are you persuaded that the said doctrine, worship, and discipline, and Church government, are founded upon the Holy Scriptures, and agreeable thereto?

4. Do you promise that, through the grace of God, you will firmly and constantly adhere to, and in your station, to the utmost of your power, assert, maintain, and defend the said doctrine, worship, and discipline, and the government of this Church, by Kirk-sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies?

5. Do you promise that, in your practice, you will conform yourself to the said worship, and submit yourself to the said discipline and government of this Church; and you shall never endeavour, directly or indirectly, the prejudice or subversion of the same?

6. Do you promise that you shall follow no divisive course from the present establishment in this Church?

7. Do you renounce all doctrines, tenets, or opinions whatsoever, contrary to, or inconsistent with, the said doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Church?

8. Do you promise that you will subject yourself to the several judicatories of this Church, and are you willing to subscribe to these things?

Having given satisfactory answers to these questions, the student subscribes the formula, in which the substance of the questions are embodied. The act against simony, Act 8, Assembly 1759, is then read to him in presence of the presbytery; the moderator is appointed to license him to preach the gospel; and the clerk is ordered to furnish him with an extract of his license.

The formula must be subscribed before licence is obtained; and presbyteries are not allowed to use any other formula but that which is prescribed by Act 10, Assembly 1711.

In some presbyteries the Court engage, previously to the licensing of the student, in prayer to the great Head and King of the Church, that He would be graciously pleased, by His word and spirit, to qualify him for the important duties in which he is about to engage. He then says—

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great King and Head of the Church, and by authority of this Presbytery, I do now license you to preach the gospel of Christ, and to exercise your gifts as a probationer for the Holy Ministry."

The moderator and the members of Presbytery present, here give the person licensed the right hand of fellowship.

After which a suitable exhortation bearing on the duties of the pastoral office which he seeks to discharge—on the right method of preaching, on the keeping up habits of study and scriptural research, and especially on the need of cultivating personal holiness, is then delivered by the moderator of the Presbytery.

Ordination of a Minister.

The ordination of any individual to the office of the Ministry, as it is gone about according to the practice of the Church of Scotland, is a solemn and interesting procedure. The Presbytery of the bounds within which the vacant parish is situated, having sustained the presentation, and the presentee having preached on a Sabbath and on a week-day before the congregation—the Presbytery likewise, having taken trial of his gifts; his edict having, ten days previously, been duly served, and no objections to his settlement having been offered on the part of the parishioners or members of the congregation, the Presbytery meet, upon the appointed day, at the church, and their moderator, *pro tempore*, constitutes the meeting of Presbytery with prayer. Even at this latest stage of the procedure, objections, as affecting the life and character of the presentee, may be offered, and proclamation to that effect is made at the church door by the officer of the Presbytery. No objection having been made, the moderator proceeds to the pulpit, and goes through the ordinary exercises of worship, commencing as usual, with praise and prayer, appropriately followed by the reading of a passage of scripture, suitable to the occasion of meeting. He then preaches a discourse, which may very appropriately relate to the duties of the Christian Ministry, and may, without impropriety, as in the case of sermons preached at the opening of the Provincial Synod, or of the General Assembly, partly by a "*concio at cleros.*" After a psalm has been sung, the presiding minister proceeds as follows:—

The minister intimates that A. B. (the person who is to be ordained), having received a presentation from C. D., the legal Patron to the vacant parish of ———; and the Presbytery having made trial of his qualifications for the ministry, and being satisfied therewith, his call having been moderated, the edict for ordination having been served, and returned duly executed and indorsed, warning all persons having any objections against his being admitted minister of said parish, to lodge the same with the Presbytery, that they may be cog-

nosced; proclamation to the same effect having also been this day made, at the most patent door of the church, and no objections offered—(or objections having been offered and disposed of, as the case may be)—the Presbytery are now to proceed to his ordination as minister of this parish by prayer and the imposition of hands. But, in order that they (the people) might be satisfied of his soundness in the Christian faith, he (the officiating clergyman) would now put to him the questions appointed by the act of Assembly, to be put to ministers at their ordination. The presentee is then called upon to give satisfactory answers to the following questions.

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and manners?

2. Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrines contained in the Confession of Faith, approven by the General Assemblies of this Church, and ratified by law in the year 1690, to be founded upon the Word of God; and do you acknowledge the same as the confession of your faith; and will you firmly and constantly adhere thereto, and to the utmost of your power assert, maintain, and defend the same, and the purity of worship as presently practised in this National Church, and asserted in Act XV., Assembly 1707, entitled, Act against innovations in the Worship of God?

3. Do you disown all Popish, Arian, Socinian, Armenian, Bourignian, and other doctrines, tenets, and opinions whatsoever, contrary to, and inconsistent with, the foresaid Confession of Faith?

4. Are you persuaded that the Presbyterian Government and discipline of this Church are founded upon the Word of God, and agreeable thereto; and do you promise to submit to the said government and discipline, and to concur with the same, and never to endeavour, directly or indirectly, the prejudice or subversion thereof, but to the utmost of your power, in your station, to maintain, support, and defend the said discipline and Presbyterian Government by Kirk-sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies, during all the days of your life?

5. Do you promise to submit yourself willingly and humbly, in the spirit of meekness, unto the admonitions or the brethren of this Presbytery, and to be subject to them, and all other Presbyteries, and superior judicatories of this Church, where God in His providence, shall cast your lot; and that, according to your power, you shall maintain the unity and peace of this Church against error and schism,

notwithstanding of whatsoever trouble and persecution may arise, and that you shall follow no divisive courses from the present established doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of this Church?

6. Are not zeal for the honour of God, love to Jesus Christ, and desire of saving souls, your great motives and chief inducements to enter into the function of the holy ministry, and not worldly designs and interest?

7. Have you used any undue methods, either by yourself or others, in procuring this call?

8. Do you engage, in the strength and grace of Jesus Christ our Lord and Master, to rule well your own family; to live a holy and circumspect life; and faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully, to discharge all the parts of the ministerial work, to the edification of the body of Christ?

9. Do you accept of, and close with, the call to be pastor of this parish, and promise, through grace, to perform all the duties of a faithful minister of the Gospel among this people.

The minister then descends from the pulpit to the place where the presentee and the members of Presbytery, and such other ordained ministers as may be present, are seated. And the person to be ordained alone kneeling, and the whole congregation standing, he pronounces the ordination prayer. When the officiating minister comes to implore the Divine blessing on the person now to be set apart to the office of the ministry, he, along with all the ordained ministers present, puts his hand upon the head of the person who still continues kneeling.

Lord God Almighty! who dwellest not in temples built with hands, but inhabitest eternity and the praises thereof, yet whose regards are with the sons of men; who art surrounded continually by the praises of the hosts above, and art served by angels who rejoice unwearedly to execute Thy commands, yet who hearkenest to the prayers of Thy people, and wilt regard their cry; behold we come before Thee to make mention of Thy greatness and Thy goodness; to supplicate Thy favour and the blessings of Thy grace.

Adored be Thy name, not only for the provision Thou hast made to supply our temporal wants, for the unwearied bounty and care which have attended our past years - for the eyes that have been preserved from tears, and the feet that have been kept from falling,

but still more for the exalted prospect to which Thou hast encouraged us to aspire – for the forgiveness of sins and the remission of offences, offered in the Gospel of Thy Son – for the assurance that there is no condemnation to such as are in Him,—for the exalted privilege and lofty delight of spending our lives in Thy service, and giving ourselves up in cheerful obedience to Thy commands.

By Thy grace and mercy toward us in Christ Jesus hast Thou set Thy glory above the heavens. Just and true are all Thy ways, O Thou King of Saints! Stable is the foundation Thou hast laid, abounding the compassion shewn to the guilty and the lost. Never didst Thou leave Thyself without a witness of Thy purposes of mercy to the fallen; but even at the fall didst give promise of the seed of the woman that should bruise the head of the serpent—of the Messiah that should be stricken for the transgressions of the people – of the substitute who was to magnify the law and make it honourable—of the Saviour who was to be lifted on the cross to draw men unto Him—to finish transgression and make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness. Lo! this is our God, we have waited for Him; this is our Saviour, whom we would magnify and adore and serve. He has accomplished the work given Him to do; He has finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness; He is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel, and the remission of sins; He has spoiled principalities and powers, and make a shew of them openly. May our understanding be enlightened to discern the truth, – our wills be moulded to His—and our hearts be prepared to receive Him—that we may be His by indissoluble union—that He may be formed in us the hope of glory.

We bless Thee that he took upon Him our nature, and is not ashamed to call us brethren—that He is a merciful and faithful high-priest in things pertaining unto God—that He ever liveth to make intercession—is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, and is able to succour them that are tempted—and that He will come again to receive His people to Himself. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Blessed be He who came in the name of the Lord to save us—who hath visited His people and redeemed them by the shedding of His precious blood. Blessing and honour and glory and praise be unto Him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb that was slain!

We praise and thank Thee, that on us the day-spring from on high has arisen to guide our steps into the path of life; that our

lot has not been cast in a land of darkness and idolatry; that we are privileged with the enjoyment of Thine ordinances; that we may worship Thee according to our conscience, none daring to make us afraid; that Thou hast continued amongst us, an order of men to proclaim Thy truth, and to impress it on the hearts of the people, and bring it to their remembrance; that Thou who didst of old raise up prophets and send forth apostles, hast given pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ.

If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, who could stand in Thy sight? Our sins testify against us; and wert Thou to set them in array before us, how should we be overwhelmed with the remembrance of duties omitted, of mercies despised, of knowledge abused, and opportunities neglected; how must we have mourned under a sense of guilt, ingratitude, and folly! Our own hearts condemn us, and Thou, who art greater then our hearts, knowest all things. From Thee our foolishness has not been hid: Thou hast set our iniquities before Thee, and brought our secret sins into the light of Thy presence.

But we rejoice that Thy thoughts and purposes are those of mercy —that judgment is Thy strange work that Thou hast no pleasure in the death of the wicked! but rather that he should turn from his sinfulness and live. Oh visit us with Thy mercy: deal with us according to Thine abundant grace, extended in Christ Jesus even unto the chief of sinners. May we be united to the Saviour by a true and living faith—be His adopted children and genuine disciples. May we fear to offend Him, and remain constantly under a sense of unmerited mercy and redeeming love.

We bless Thee that Thy Church has been continued in the world —that the gates of hell have not prevailed against her; and that, though the time of miracles has long since ceased, there never have been wanting ministers of the Gospel and preachers of the Word. Thou hast continued to raise up faithful men, who should be able to teach others also, in discharge of a risen Saviour's commission, Go, preach the Gospel to every creature.

We thank Thee that Thou hast established a Church in our native land, and we beseech Thee to bless all her ministers that Thy pleasure may indeed prosper in their hands. Be as a wall of fire around our Zion, and the glory in the midst of her.

Especially at this time, we beseech Thee, to pour out on Thy servant abundantly, the grace of the Holy Spirit.

(Here the officiating Minister and the other members of Presbytery place their hands on the head of the Presentee who is kneeling before them).

Whom, in Thy name and by Thine own authority, we now set apart to the office of the holy ministry. Lay liberally to his hand, in the exercise of His sacred calling among this people. May He be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Sustain him in bodily strength. Give him wisdom and spiritual discernment. May he keep his trust with diligence. May his studies be prospered, and may he be enabled to feed alike the sheep and the lambs of the fold. Bless him abundantly, O Lord; may he be a source of blessing to many; and when Jesus the chief Shepherd shall appear, may he receive a crown of glory that shall never fade away.

Hallow, O Lord, we beseech Thee, the bond that now connects this pastor and this people. May they wait with punctuality and attention upon his ministrations; and may they mutually seek to be heirs together of the grace of life, seeking the kingdom that never shall be moved, and desirous of growing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Hear and accept of us we beseech Thee, for the sake of Christ Jesus, our strength and Redeemer. Amen.

The officiating Minister then addresses, as follows, the Minister newly ordained:—

"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, and by the authority of this Presbytery, I now admit you to the pastoral charge of this parish, and to all the rights and privileges belonging thereto, as such, and give you the right hand of fellowship."

In this the Moderator is joined by the other clergymen present, after which he resumes his place in the pulpit, delivering an address, first to the Minister, and then to the members of the congregation—the former standing during the time that the address to him is being delivered.

The service is then concluded in the ordinary manner with prayer and praise—the prayer making special reference to the solemnity, in which all present have been engaged. The concluding service of praise ended, the officiating Minister

makes some such intimation as follows, before pronouncing the blessing:—

"The members of the congregation will have an opportunity of taking their Minister by the hand, and of bidding him welcome among them, as they retire from the Church."

After the dismission of the congregation, the Presbytery resume their sitting, at which the newly-ordained Minister is required to subscribe anew the Confession of Faith, and the Formula of the Church; and his name (unless it be already standing on the roll of the Presbytery), is added thereto.

On the admission of a Minister previously ordained, to a vacant parish, there is a similar service, conducted like that last described, with the exception, of course, of the ordination prayer.

Charge to the Minister.

You have now been invested with a most arduous, yet honourable office, and set apart to the service of God, under the weightiest obligations to fidelity. From this time your life should be mainly devoted to a special purpose; you are not as other men, called on to involve yourself with worldly business, but are to appear among them as an "ambassador for Christ." Your commission has been given, and your sphere marked out; and if, as I doubt not, the chief motive to your entrance on the holy ministry has been a sense of the love of God in Christ, and a desire of doing good to souls, it is not needful that I should advert at length to the feelings that should animate you, or to the nature of those duties which you have this day promised before God, and in the presence of this people to perform. These will already have formed the subject of your thoughts; and while alive to the consciousness of your own weakness, and the constant need of grace and strength from on high, that you may "take heed unto yourself and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseer," I doubt not also that you will anxiously seek to do your part—to fulfil the trust implied in being "a fellow-worker with God"—to watch for souls as one that must give account—to seek them for your hire—that you may receive at last this approval, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

In accordance, however, with the salutary practice of our Church, permit me to remind you of some of the difficulties attending the

faithful discharge of the duties of the ministerial office, and likewise of some of the encouragements held out to the labourers in the vineyard, which are so well adapted and so greatly needed to cheer and console their hearts. But let me, at the outset, place before you as worthy to be kept in view from this hour till your appointed course is run—the comprehensive and emphatic words of the apostle in his charge to Timothy—as presenting an outline of ministerial duty, and setting forth the standard of scriptural fidelity. "Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Neglect not the gift that is in thee. Meditate upon these things—give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself and to the doctrine—continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee."

The more we ponder the meaning which such expressions as these involve, the more strongly should we be impressed with the magnitude of the ministerial office, the weakness of human strength, and the need of imparted aid, that we may prove workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth—using with fortitude and discretion the weapons of the heavenly armoury—instructing the ignorant in the elements of saving truth—building up the more advanced—offering a word in season to the weary—sowing the Gospel seed abroad, while looking for His blessing who can alone command the increase, and send down rain to refresh His weary heritage. To discharge aright this trust, what need of knowledge, of diligence, of faith, of prayer! What earnestness should there not be in our appeals, what clearness in our statements, what reiteration of the need that guilty sinners have to find pardon and peace, to seek after holiness and become fit for heaven! What need of casting aside the fear of man, of speaking boldly, of suffering not the trumpet to give a faint and uncertain sound, of bearing testimony from the fulness of the heart to the rich provision God has made for them that love him—of girding up every energy and employing every power—of feeding in private, by "taking heed" to ourselves, and cultivating holiness, that flame of piety and love and zeal which will sustain under labour and cheer in despondency, and animate to steadfast perseverance in this great and goodly work—fainting not nor wearying—having the spirit willing even though the flesh be weak—till we are called home to rest, and see our Master face to face!

For the end and aim of the Christian ministry is nothing less than that men should be turned from the love of sin to the desire of holi-

ness, from the service of Satan to that of Christ. The way of life must, therefore, be pointed out—the doctrines of salvation declared—the duties arising from these enforced. The barriers of unbelief require to be thrown down—the indifference of the ice-cold heart melted—the torpid and slumbering conscience aroused. The blind eyes must be opened—the wanderers on the world's highway urged to ascend the steep—to press through the strait gate and make progress along the narrow path. We are to ask a hearing for a message most ungrateful to the carnal and the proud,—a message pre-supposing guilt, and ruin—the ravages of a spiritual malady. Hard as experience proves the task to be, we must strive that every objecting mouth may be stopped, and all shewn to be guilty in the sight of heaven; declare the need of a spiritual change, and grapple with prevailing reluctance to acknowledge the imminence and certainty of danger. The formalists are to be aroused, and the proud humbled; yet the desponding behove to be comforted—and the penitent directed to behold Jesus, "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Nay more: all this is to be done in spite of the efforts made by the enemy of souls to steal truth from the heart—to wear down convictions—to bring forward the temptations of the world, and the alluring nature of sinful compliance, with its deceitful promise and traitor smile. We must give warning of shoals and sunken rocks abounding in the passage—of snares and pitfalls lying on every side—of the malice of mighty antagonists now pouring down in open assault, now craftily lurking in secret ambuscade. We are to expose the fallaciousness of every remedy that does not reach the seat of the distemper, and declare the need for a new principle being implanted. We have to call on men to look from the things that are seen and temporal to those which are unseen and eternal—to "crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts,"—to comply with the call of Christ—to deny themselves and take up the cross. Entering then on such an office—our souls might truly despond, our hearts be filled with trouble and with sorrow; there would be the overwhelming and crushing feeling of utter impotence, had we *thus* to contend unaided—did we not possess the countenance of our heavenly leader—were not the promise given "Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world." Who otherwise durst venture to mingle in this warfare, or take part in this ministry whose results are connected with the long eternity,—when we are told, in words that ought to thrill with a sense of responsibility, while they remind us that the issue of our efforts must be left to God, of whom we are to some the "savour of death unto death," but to

others of "life unto life." Let, then, all our studies be made subservient to this our great employment. Let us seek to understand more fully the scope and meaning of the sacred writings, digging deep into the exhaustless treasury that we may shew the riches that reward the search. Let us give what time we can from active duty and from needful relaxation to careful meditation upon divine truth, not satisfied with presenting unformed views or traversing the same beaten path; but seeking, as scribes well-instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom, to open up doctrine and duty in their befitting connection and wide details,—unsparing of labour, fired with the noble ambition of extended and continued usefulness—as ambassadors of Christ,—bringing forth from the treasury things new and old—seeking to give full proof of our ministry—to speak, to exhort, to rebuke, with all long-suffering and authority, remembering that our own time may be short, that our hearers are fast hastening to an eternal world—and that we must account to God for the method in which we discharged our obligations to the flock given us in charge; must answer to Him as to the manner in which we taught the young—directed the desirous—spoke comfort to the mourner—visited the sick and sought to prepare the dying.

Yet arduous as the post is, which you have this day been called to occupy, it is one to which there are attached no ordinary promises and motives of encouragement. We are not to speak so much in words of human wisdom, as in those which the Holy Ghost teacheth. Your office is of divine appointment—intended for the conversion of the sinner—for the "perfecting of the saints, and the edifying of the body of Christ"—in which the labours of many, who preached not themselves, but Jesus Christ, have been blessed with success that cheered and rejoiced their hearts—in the awakening of their hearers to religious earnestness, and the subduing of their souls to the obedience of the truth. Your commission is, in itself, limited and defined, while in its enforcement and illustration there is wide range afforded; nor do you require to go beyond the word itself, to find the groundwork of the strongest arguments that can be brought to bear upon the mind and conscience. You have to deal with wondrous facts—to announce a glorious embassy—to publish good tidings of recovery and forgiveness—to address men on subjects most intimately connected with their hopes and fears—not merely with the right ordering of the life that now is, but with the stupendous and surpassing realities of the world to come. You are especially to exhibit Christ in all His satisfying fulness; and can there

be a more glorious theme whereon to dwell, or greater and more generous love whereof to speak? You have to delineate the character to be exemplified by His genuine disciples—the *very* mind that was in Christ—the consummate holiness which, could it be generally diffused, would irradiate earth once more with its Creator's smile, and recall the memory of that time when our first father gladly conversed with God amidst the trees of the garden. You have to exhibit the wondrous things spoken of the "city of God," that the souls of men may be re-possessed with longing after its blessed service and enduring rest. Above all, you are acting under the dispensation of the Spirit, through the imparting of whose influence, the native powerlessness of human effort is endowed with celestial vigour—the weak becomes strong—the truth finds entrance —the Saviour is revealed—the heart is won—the promise is fulfilled, "My word shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish the thing whereunto I sent it." Thus, then, go forth to act in the service of your heavenly Master, willing to "endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." The Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, nor is his ear heavy that it cannot hear. Remember that you may be set for "the fall or the rising of many in Israel." "Be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might," looking forward to the approaching time, when "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." And may the blessing of the Lord our God be upon thee: may He keep thee in all thy ways, and enable thee to make full proof of thy ministry, and give thee at last the reward of faithful service and abundant labours.

Address to the Congregation.

It is now my duty to address the members of this congregation, over whom a new labourer has been appointed. You have witnessed him whom you have chosen as your pastor, invested with the ministerial office; ready to engage in his Master's service, desirous of watching for souls, willing to exert himself to promote your spiritual welfare. But think not, my friends, that solemn responsibility rests upon him alone. What has been done this day has been done in the sight of God, and may be fraught with mighty consequences in respect of your condition throughout eternity. He is an ambassador for Christ among you, and is therefore to be heard as speaking with authority. He desires not yours but you, and therefore is worthy

of your affection and regard. He is to address you from the Word of God; his private labour and public teaching—the results of his previous studies, the fruits of his weakly researches—are to be devoted to the explanation and enforcement of the sacred volume; and therefore he ought to be esteemed highly for his works' sake—his message should be heard with candour and attention. While, undoubtedly, you are only to follow him so far as he follows Christ, yet the hearers of the gospel ought to be most strictly on their guard against unjust censure and a captious spirit; and to be very sure—ere they question what is said by him who is commissioned to instruct them in sacred things—that the defect or misstatement they complain of, does not arise from their own erroneous or imperfect views. In these days, especially, when serious doctrinal errors are again afloat; when rash and distempered speculation is so much indulged; when peculiar points are unduly magnified; when unenlightened interpretation would found largely on isolated statements in defiance of the general analogy of scripture; when so many would be teachers, who themselves require to be taught the first principles of the oracles of God; when the eagerness—nay, the bitterness—of party spirit would magnify differences about minor and external points, and erect a barrier of separation between those who equally hold the great vital and saving truths of the gospel—who have equally "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all;" when there is too much rending of the unity of the faith and breaking of the bond of peace;—be it yours, my friends, to ask for and to keep by the "old paths"—to resist novel and dangerous excitement, adhering to what has stood the test of ages; "as much as lieth in you to live peaceably with all men," but especially to cultivate that holiness without which no man can see the Lord. Be on your guard against brilliant and deceptive novelties, and lights that lead astray; for these are "perilous times" in which we live, and by these are many unstable souls beguiled. Be on the watch against a vain philosophy, a spirit of rash and unwarrantable speculation, a spirit of loud profession, and a spirit of indifference. Listen with meekness to "the engrafted word which is able to save the soul," and be not hearers only, but doers of that word; praying earnestly for your own enlightenment, for the strengthening of *his* hands whose field of labour is amongst you, for the establishment of the kingdom of grace in your own hearts, and in the hearts of those who are yet strangers to its power; that they may receive the truth in the love of it, and may know the dignity and

peace, and feel the longing for purity and fruitfulness in good works, characteristic of such as serve the Lord Jesus Christ. Attend punctually on the ministrations of grace, desiring that your souls may be edified, and your minds filled with that heavenly wisdom which can guide in difficulty and sustain in trial. Receive the word spoken in the sanctuary as that not of man, but of God; which, when accompanied by the power of His Spirit, worketh effectually in all that believe. Thus may you hope to find it answer the great purpose for which it has been given, and thus may your profiting be known.

Remember, then, the obligations incumbent on every hearer of the gospel, the account of warning and instruction that must be given in at last. Hold fast the Word of Life, press forward to the hope of glory: make the Word of God the subject of your thoughts and prayers. Damp not the heart, nor chill the energies of your minister, by a listlessness and carelessness which must but too fatally re-act upon yourselves; give him not cause to say that he has stretched out his hands to a "disobedient and a gainsaying people." Commend him much to the care and guidance of his heavenly Father. Receive him kindly for his own and his Master's sake, remembering *whose* representative he is amongst you. Finally, be zealous to "redeem the time," knowing not how soon the period may come to each when ordinances will be for ever past, and when the wrath of God must be revealed to such as have not known nor obeyed the truth. And may "the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Ordination of Elders.

The Elders, who are chosen from amongst the most respectable and pious members of the congregation, and who, if worthy of the office, and having proper views of the duties which it involves, can do much to strengthen a Minister's hand, constitute along with the Minister, the Kirk Session of the parish When it is considered to be desirable that their number should be augmented, the persons deemed best qualified, are nominated and conferred with by the Kirk Session. On signifying their willingness to comply with the invitation, intimation of the proposed appointment is made to the congregation at least ten free days before their admission. An edict is served, and on its return, if no objections be stated, the Minister, after the forenoon service, proceeds to set them apart to the office—first proposing the following questions, to which their individual assent is required.

He then offers up an appropriate prayer, and proceeds to address the newly admitted members of Kirk Session and the congregation in some such manner as follows:—

Ordination of Elders.

The Kirk Session of this parish and congregation having, in conformity to the laws of the church, elected ———— to the office of the Eldership; and the edict of these gentlemen having been duly served and returned without objections; this day was appointed for their ordination, to which act I am now about to proceed.

But before doing so, it is requisite that the following questions should be put, to which all candidates for the office of Eldership in the Church of Scotland are required to give their assent:—

Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the word of God, and the only rule of faith and manners?

Do you believe the Presbyterian form of worship and church-government to be founded on, and agreeable to, the Word of God; and will you, to the best of your ability, maintain and defend the same against all heresy and schism?

Do you engage to be diligent and faithful in discharging the duties of the office of the Eldership in this parish, and to administer, with impartiality, the discipline of the Church amongst this people?

Will you submit yourselves, in the spirit of meekness, to the admonitions and discipline of the judicatories of this Church?

Do you own and adhere to the Confession of Faith of this Church; and do you declare your readiness now, or at any time when it shall be demanded of you, to sign the same?

In consequence of the answers which you have now given to these questions, I proceed to ordain you as Elders of the Church, by prayer and supplication, and your brethren in office will give you the right hand of fellowship, after the blessing is pronounced.

PRAYER.

ADDRESS.

In declaring your willingness when conferred with in private, and again in presence of this people, to accept the office of the Eldership, you have given unequivocal testimony, both of firm adherence to the Church of Scotland, and of your desire to afford aid to those who have already in charge the oversight of this parish and congregation. We rejoice in having found men from whose co-operation we trust to derive happiness and comfort; and feel assured of a continuance of the same harmony and desire of working together for good that have hitherto characterised the Kirk Session of this place.

I feel persuaded that it is unnecessary to say much in regard to the obligations that flow, and the duties that arise from your entrance upon this honourable and important office in the Church of Christ. It is a charge implying diligence and zeal, prudence and fidelity, in which, we doubt not, that *you* will seek, by the divine blessing, to abound. The constitution of the Church of Scotland recognises the exercise of no control over those who are entrusted with the ministerial office, save on the part of the higher judicatories of the Church, in regard to their purely spiritual functions. To the Master only whom they serve, and to those to whom has been committed that aggregate authority which constitutes a peculiar feature of the system of church government to which we adhere; are those who have been put in trust with the ministry of the gospel viewed as responsible in the work of public instruction and of pastoral admonition. But in whatever concerns the exercise of discipline and the maintenance of jurisdiction over the people committed to our charge, we desire to derive benefit from the counsel and assistance of those who can aid us in giving heed unto the flock, and, in the exercise of Christian wisdom, impart advice in cases of difficulty,

and help in the superintendence of those whose spiritual benefit and growth in grace is our most anxious wish and prayer. As those who would not lord it over the Redeemer's heritage, and would not even be suspected of exercising despotic and dictatorial power, we seek the help of individuals whose station and means of acquiring information enable them to act beneficially; and who, by their unblemished conduct and Christian worth, may afford to others an example of those things which are "pure and lovely and of good report." We do not claim for the office to which you have been called such imperative and essential necessity as to say that no Church of Christ can lawfully subsist without it; but we imagine that it is not impossible to find traces of its existence in apostolic times;* we find it recognized in the writings of those ancient authors, from whom information may be obtained in regard to the proceedings in the early communities of the faithful who desired to be of one accord and mind, and to continue steadfastly in the love and practice of those doctrines, which are according to godliness; while experience has amply shown its beneficial tendency in contributing to the regulation and enlargement of that Church which the Redeemer has purchased with His blood.

As members, then, of this Kirk Session, we look to you in order that our hands may be strengthened; and welcome you as fellow-labourers who may give us material aid in the cultivation of the vine yard; ruling well, and "careful for the flock, wise, and above all things fearing God." To you we look as contributing, according to your power, towards the rebuke of vice and irreligion; as desirous of taking an interest in, and exercising superintendence over all measures that may be adopted, and establishments that are intended in this parish for the relief of temporal distress, and for the imparting of sound education and religious knowledge; bearing in mind that whatever words of counsel you may give out of unfeigned love to Christ; whatever efforts you may make to instruct and to benefit others; whatever time you can spare to discharge the several duties of your office; whatever you may do, even by the silent influence of example—by holy and consistent lives—to recommend to others the practise of true religion; whatever the missions of charity and love on which you may proceed;—all will be so much done in conformity with His example, who came "not to be ministered unto, but to minister;" whose soul expanded in love towards His brethren, according to the flesh; who laboured unweariedly for

* 1. Corin. xi. 1—5.

their good; who "came to seek and save that which was lost," who had compassion on the ignorant, and on them that were out of the way.

Nor let your hearts be dismayed if, in the course of discharging those duties which pertain to the Eldership, you should occasionally meet with circumstances of discouragement, or with instances in which your endeavours to do good are rewarded with ingratitude. It is a small thing to have censorious and unfair estimates formed by man; if we are privileged with the approbation of the Judge of all, who will not forget our works of faith, and our labours of love. Be not then ashamed of the testimony of the Lord; nor be moved from the way of truth and the path of rectitude by the "fear of man which bringeth a snare;" but seek to admonish, to reprove, and to exhort with all long-suffering and patience. Nor despair of those who seem to be unaffected by your first counsels and admonitions; for the fruit of your exertions, if deferred for a time, may ultimately appear; and even though, unhappily, no good may be effected and no abiding impression made, relief is found in the thought that we have done whatever lay within our power—that we have cleared our consciences by having fulfilled our part.

For discharging creditably to yourselves and advantageously for others many of the ordinary functions of this office, little more is required than the exercise of the same prudence, wisdom, and Christian discretion which belong to a more private station. No demand is made for any very active interference in ecclesiastical government, or for any peculiar insight into its details. But you may occasionally be called upon to share in the deliberations of higher judicatories than the Kirk Session, in which questions may be agitated of a more general interest and more public nature. For understanding and taking part in these, some measure of acquaintance, derived from thought, observation, and knowledge of our ecclesiastical polity, will be found of great advantage. If time and opportunity permit, such details may form a profitable subject of examination for those who are admitted to the Eldership, and who may be possessed of such leisure as admits of their giving a larger degree of attention than others to the general welfare of the Church. But mainly, the duties of your office are such as pertain to its ordinary exercise; those are its most important functions in which good may be done within that portion of the vineyard, and amongst that people with whom you are now connected by a nearer and stronger tie; and in discharging which you will look for something far loftier and more

abiding than the honour that cometh from men, even the approbation of the Most High; the abundant reward reserved for those who, having improved the talents committed to them, and having been "faithful unto death," shall at last receive "a crown of life." To God and to His grace I now commend you; may His blessing rest upon you, and abide with you for ever! Amen.

Address to the Congregation.

My brethren, those whom have witnessed set apart this day to the Eldership, along with their brethren in office, have, from the relation in which they stand towards you, the strongest claims on your respect and consideration, your confidence and regard. They are worthy of it, not merely on their own account, but because of the peculiar nature of the duties which they have undertaken to discharge. The disinterestedness of their office, the sacrifice of time, and the measure of attention which it involves, the fact that it is followed by no other reward than that which accompanies doing good, enhance this claim. Esteem them, therefore, highly for their works' sake; receive any counsel or advice that they may offer, as undertaken from a sense of duty, and prompted by a strong desire for your welfare; bearing in mind that, so far from cherishing any desire to obtrude it, they will feel most gratified by its being uncalled for. Instead of giving way to the slightest feeling of censoriousness, or any tendency to find fault with them arising from the office that they hold—a fault in *you* of which I am far from entertaining any anticipation—view them constantly with the charity that "thinketh no evil," and with the confidence and regard which their deportment is entitled to inspire; as those who will rejoice in being serviceable, and who are sincerely anxious, so far as lies in their power, to promote your welfare. Welcome them cordially, as servants of Christ, as desirous of doing good according to the measure of their opportunity and means; giving them your countenance, your submission, and your prayers; bearing also in remembrance that all, whether office bearers in the church or not, are called upon to "grow in grace," to abound in faith, in love, and in good works, doing good unto all up to their ability; as parents, faithful; as children, obedient; as masters, ordering well their households; as servants, acting in the fear of the Lord; as poor, yet rich in treasure laid up in heaven; as possessing whatever measure of this world's goods has been afforded, not abusing these, nor living to yourselves alone, "forasmuch as the fashion of this world passeth away," and we must all soon enter into an un-

changeable and eternal state. Let every one that beareth the name of Christ, seek to have his "conversation in heaven," and to depart from the love and practice of iniquity; not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of the mind; "one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil, and cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; not slothful in business," but "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer." "The Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means;" and to his name be praise and glory ascribed. Amen.

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